THE GOSPEL ROLL:

OR,

THE FACTS AND GLORIES OF THE GOSPEL UNFOLDED

IN A SERIES OF DISCOURSES,

COMPRISING

AN EXPOSITION OF THE LEADING GOSPEL TEXTS OF SCRIPTURE.

BY FRANCIS JOHNSTONE,
EDINBURGH.

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters."—*Isaiah.*
"Fear not: for, behold, I bring to you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people."—*An Angel of the Lord.*

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PREFACE.

THE words of the Preacher on the endlessness of book-making may be viewed as a prediction, the accomplishment of which will be seen till the end of the world. It may be said, We have already books on the Gospel; why, then, another? Our reply is: The inexpressible grandeur and importance of the theme give it an unrivalled claim to the repeated attention of all. And while there are books which have "the Gospel" in their title, not many, of which the writer is aware, have the same end or the same plan with this. We have "The Gospel worthy of all acceptation," and "The Gospel its own witness,"—both by Andrew Fuller. But the design of neither is to open up the great facts of the Gospel; that of the former being to shew "the duty of sinners to believe in Jesus Christ;" and of the latter, to contrast Christianity with infidelity. "The Gospel in Ezekiel," by Dr Guthrie, is, like all the author's productions, full of beautiful sketches, but having two great faults: one, the inappropriateness of the

title and the texts; and the other, the want of a clear statement of what the Gospel distinctively is. The portion which comes nearest to this work is that on the perfections of God as seen in the salvation of man. Then we have a bulky volume of miscellaneous sermons, with the title of the first sermon, singularly enough, given to the whole book—namely, "The Gospel of Jesus Christ," by J. Addison Alexander. When I first saw the title and size of this book, my impression was, if it did not render the publication of my thoughts unnecessary, I might learn much from it of which I might avail myself. But, upon opening and examining the book, I was surprised to find the title correspond only to the first discourse; many of the others not being the Gospel properly so called, no more than the Law. The book which comes nearest to my mind in the distinctiveness of its treatment, is "The Gospel in its various aspects," by William Landels. In it the Gospel is set forth with unmistakable clearness and scriptural simplicity. But my plan reaches much farther—namely, to open up and expound all the leading scriptures where the Gospel is most fully and pointedly stated.

Amid many others which variously set forth the Gospel I hope not to be deemed presumptuous in venturing also to speak my mind, through the press, on a theme so full of attractions, and so closely allied to the best interests of the souls of men. The author

ventures, with all humility, and with earnest prayer, to usher his thoughts into the world, hoping that this book will continue, many days after he has left this vale of tears, to make known "the Gospel of the glory of the happy God," and to be the means of leading not a few to enter into the faith and joy of the love of God in the mediation of his Son. Some parts of the volume may be deemed more fitted for the scholar than for common readers. Here and there are criticisms necessary to clear the way to a thorough scriptural view of the great truths. But these are presented in a manner so simple, that it is hoped all may read them with pleasure and profit. Many, if not all, of the statements made are of the deepest interest, and, in my judgment, tend greatly to a clearer and fuller apprehension of the meaning of the Scriptures expounded. The author sends his humble production into the world with entire dependence on the blessing of the Most High, whose love has provided salvation for man; and with fervent prayer that, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, it may prove a savour of life unto life to many souls.

FRANCIS JOHNSTONE.

Duddingston,
EDINBURGH, *July* 1862.

THE GOSPEL.

CHAPTER I.

"The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God."—MARK i. 1.

1. THE Gospel being the good news of eternal life to man, a knowledge of it, belief in it, and obedience to it, must be of the highest importance to every one. Believing with all our heart that it is God's remedy, and the only remedy, for the sins and woes of mankind, we deem it our duty to bring it again and again before the notice of our fellow-men. On no truth should the servant of the Lord more frequently dwell. The very fact that the preacher is distinctively a minister of the Gospel, intimates that it should be his great, his leading, his almost perpetual theme. While also every child of God must know it for himself, it is his duty to learn its great truths in such a manner as to be able clearly and forcibly to teach them to others, and thus to blow the trumpet of salvation so as to give

a certain sound. The fact that great ignorance of the Gospel prevails among multitudes even of our church-going people impresses us powerfully with the necessity of such a distinctive and varied proclamation as is attempted here. Earnestly does the writer pray that the holy Spirit of God may guide his mind to give such a view of the good news of God in Christ as shall lead many to know and believe, to obey and live.

2. It is impossible for any man to have his heart too deeply impressed with a sense of the glory and worth of the Gospel. We entreat all to study it, to get to know its great and glorious facts, to understand its precious and soul-saving truths. Without the Gospel, dear friends, you are lost, you perish for ever. In the Gospel, God himself pleads with you not to die, but to choose life, that you may live for ever. "Why will you die?" Can you give any reason? If so, tell it to your Maker, who asks you why. The Gospel being the plan, and the only plan, of deliverance from eternal death, and being for you, as it is for all, there is no reason why you should die but your own neglect. A miserable reason; yet heavy enough to sink you, as it has sunk millions, into eternal fire. Again we ask you, "Why will you die," when here is the way, and the only way, to eternal life?

3. The Gospel is Christ's life-boat sent by the God of love to the rescue of a wrecked and sinking world, that every one who comes into it, trusting his soul in the hands of the Lord Jesus, may by him be saved from the wreck, and convoyed in safety to the shores of

light and glory. The Gospel is heaven's ladder let down to this lower world, that the children of men may step on to it, and climb it in the assurance of reaching the portals of endless bliss, and entering into the boundless joys of paradise. The Gospel is a circle drawn by an Allmighty hand with matchless love and unerring skill; a circle of which the Son of God is the centre, and his kingdom the circumference, and within which every soul must come in order to salvation; and within which all who come and abide are saved from sin and all its woes, and raised to God and endless glory. In short, the Gospel is the work of God for the race of man, that all may hear and believe, obey and live. What then, beloved friends, remains for you but to take with thankful hearts and willing hands the unspeakable gift of unspeakable love? Step into the life-boat, and, under the guidance of Jesus, you cannot fail to reach the shores of bliss. Climb the ladder, and ere long you reach a mansion in the skies. Come within the circle of redeeming grace and there abide, and by and by you will find yourself within the circle of angelic glory.

4. The universal and perpetual proclamation of the story of redemption is binding on the children of God by the commission and command of the Lord Jesus Christ, who, having finished his work on earth, before going to his seat at his Father's right hand, charged his followers to preach the Gospel to every creature, giving the assurance of salvation to all who believe and obey, and of condemnation to those who refuse and

rebel. Bound by this command and armed with this warrant, we aim now to lay before all who will lend a willing ear, the glad tidings of great joy. In doing so, we shall examine the meaning, derivation, and varied use of the word *Gospel*, the leading relations and features, facts and glories of the Gospel. In these few words we have a wide field over which to range, a field of wonders and of wealth which may well employ the loftiest minds, and will eternally repay the keenest anxiety, the closest research, and the strongest faith.

CHAPTER II.

THE WORD GOSPEL.

I. The Meaning and Derivation of the Word.

1. The Greek word *ευαγγελιον, evangel,* rendered Gospel, is compounded of *ευ, good,* and *αγγελια,* a *message* or *narration.* Its meaning is therefore plainly good news, a good message, a good story. Found in the Greek Testament no fewer than seventy-seven times, it is generally applied to the good news of God in Christ, hence always rendered *Gospel.* Thus: "The beginning, *του ευαγγελιου,* of the *Gospel* of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." That is, the beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ, Mark i. 1.

2. Two words derived from it are also found in Scripture—the verb, *ευαγγελιζω, evangelize,* to bring good news, to preach the Gospel; and the substantive, *ευαγγελιστης, evangelist,* a bringer of good news, a preacher of the Gospel, a Gospeller. As connected with our theme, the Scripture use of both these words demands remark.

1st. The verb *ευαγγελιζω,* to *evangelize,* to *bring good news,* is found fifty-five times in the New Testament. While it might almost always be rendered

according to its literal meaning, to *bring good tidings,* yet in our version it is translated in seven different ways. Once to *declare,* Rev. x. 7; once to *declare glad tidings,* Acts xiii. 32; once to *bring glad tidings,* Rom. x. 15; twice to *shew glad tidings,* Luke i. 19, viii. 1; twice to *bring good tidings,* Luke ii. 10, 1 Thess. iii. 6; twenty-four times to *preach,* without saying what, as Luke iii. 18; and other twenty-four times to *preach,* adding the word *gospel,* as Matth. xi. 5; Luke xx. 1. This addition is needless, and in some cases gives a mistaken view of the meaning. We will shortly illustrate these two statements:—

(1.) The addition of the word *gospel* in all these cases is needless. For example, in Pet. i. 12, 25, iv. 6, the idea is simply bringing good news. This is farther evident from the fact that in four cases the word *ευαγγελιον, gospel,* is added by the inspired writers themselves—namely, in 1 Cor. xv. 2; 2 Cor. xi. 7; Gal. i. 11; Rev. xiv. 6.

(2.) The addition of the word *gospel* in a number of cases gives a mistaken view of the meaning. The verb *ευαγγελιζω,* to *bring good news,* does not always refer to the Gospel, but sometimes to good news of other things. For example, the birth of a son, as in Luke i. 19; the prosperity of a church, 1 Thess. iii. 6; the finishing of the mystery of God, Rev. x. 7. There are three cases particularly in which the insertion of the word *gospel* conveys a mistaken idea. In Luke iv. 18, it should be, "He hath anointed me to *bring* or *preach good tidings* to the poor," as in Isa. lxi. 1.

Do we ask what the good tidings are? the remainder of the passage gives the answer — Healing to the broken-hearted, release to captives, sight to the blind, relief to the bruised, the acceptable year of the Lord. This also explains two other scriptures, where the same mistaken addition of the word *gospel* is found—namely, Matth. xi. 5; Luke vii. 2. The Gospel, as we now understand it, was not yet unfolded; it was only budding. Again, in Gal. iii. 8, it should be, "*brought good news* to Abraham." Do we ask what the good news were? Not the Gospel, but the cheering truth that so great an honour was conferred upon him—that "in him all the nations were to be blessed." Again, in Heb. iv. 2, it should be, "Unto us *good news have been brought*, even as unto them." Do we ask what the good news are? the former verse gives the answer—namely, "a promise of entering into his rest." This was the good news brought to Israel regarding the earthly Canaan, and the same to us regarding the heavenly Canaan. The one word, which in verse 2 is rendered, "*gospel* preached," is, in verse 6, *preached*, without the word *gospel*. Both should be in English, as they are in the Greek, the same, "*good news brought*" —namely, of rest in Canaan.

2d. The substantive, *ευαγγελιστης*, *evangelist*, a *bringer of good tidings*, a *Gospeller*, is found in the New Testament only thrice—and always left untranslated. Thus, Christ, among other gifts bestowed on the Church, gave some to be *evangelists*, that is, men peculiarly fitted to publish the good news of salvation

from place to place, Efes. iv. 11. Filip, one of the seven, was so qualified. Hence his labours in Samaria, and other places, Acts viii. Hence called *the evangelist,* Acts xxi. 8. Timothy, another of the same class of men, is exhorted by Paul to "do the work of *an evangelist,*" 2 Tim. iv. 5. Our own word *Gospeller,* which is now little used, accurately answers to the Greek word *evangelist.* About the time of the English Reformation, the Papists gave the name of *Gospellers* to those who read the Scriptures at large, but especially the *Gospels,* in the English version. In the time of Bunyan, Christians generally were sometimes called Gospellers. See Notes.

2. The English word Gospel denotes plainly, good news, glad tidings; and is therefore truly and beautifully descriptive of God's message of mercy through Jesus Christ. Derived from the Saxon, and compounded of the name *God,* or the qualitative, *god,* the old form of *good,* and the word *spell,* a *tale* or *story,* it was anciently written *Godspell,* denoting either a good spell, or God's spell; a good story, or God's story; in other words, good news of God.

From the oldest example of the word with which we have met, written somewhere about the twelfth century, we not only find it thus written in full, *Godspell,* but we also find the term applied to the life of Christ, as contained in what we in the same way call the four Gospels. The life of the Lord Jesus at large is Gospel indeed, not only a good story, but the best ever told; yea, more, it is God's story, the story of

the love of God in the life of his Son. According to the Saxon derivation it may, therefore, well be called both a good spell, and God's spell. See Notes.

II. The Varied Use of the Word.

The word *Gospel* has a twofold use, namely, historical and doctrinal. The historical Gospel is the life of Christ, the written record of Christ's history from his incarnation to his ascension. The doctrinal Gospel is life through Christ, the good news of salvation from sin and death, and of life everlasting in God and glory. It is interesting to notice, that it is the life of Christ, from first to last, which brings life to men. Hence the historical Gospel is the basis of the doctrinal Gospel. Let us notice them in order :—

1. The Gospel in history.

The historical use of the word *Gospel,* is its application to the four inspired records of the life of the Lord Jesus Christ, written by two apostles and two evangelists, and called the four Gospels. We do not find the word thus used by the New Testament writers themselves. The nearest approach is in the words with which Mark begins his narrative, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God." Possibly this scripture may have given rise to the historical use of the word, which, if not derived from the apostles themselves, began in the age following, as we find both Justin and Origen in the second century calling the memoirs of Christ's life *ευαγγελια, Gospels.* See Notes.

From the historical use of the word we are led to observe, that the life of Christ is truly good news. His whole history, from the hour when he left his Father, to the hour when he returned to sit down at his right hand—all that he began to do and to teach; all he said and suffered; all this is gospel indeed, being glad tidings to all people from God himself. This is seen not only in the facts themselves, but also in the design for which they were written, namely, "that men might believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing, they might have life in his name."

2. The Gospel in doctrine.

The doctrinal use of the word *Gospel* is twofold, namely, that which is called *Gospel*, or good news during the life of Christ on earth; and that which is called *Gospel*, or good news after his ascension, and the outpouring of the Spirit. The leading idea of the word during Christ's life was the good news of the near approach of the long looked for kingdom of God. The leading idea of the word after the descent of the holy Spirit, when the kingdom came, was the good news of the work of the king in laying the foundation of the kingdom among men. The former is its use in Matthew and Mark, the only two Gospel writers who employ the word *ευαγγελιον*, *Gospel*, in the life of Christ. The latter is its use in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles, and is the grand idea which distinguishes the Gospel as now understood in the Church of God. The distinction we shall consider more fully under the two

ideas—the Gospel of the kingdom, and the Gospel of the king—the former being the beginning of the latter, Mark i. 1.

1st. The Gospel, or good news, of the kingdom.

When John, the forerunner of the Messiah came, the burden of his proclamation was, "The kingdom of God is near." The very same was the proclamation of the Lord Jesus himself. Compare Matt. iii. 2, iv. 17. This was indeed gospel, good news; and so it is called. Hence we read four times of "the gospel," that is, "the good news of the kingdom," as it is called by Matthew; but more fully by Mark, "the gospel," or "good news, of the kingdom of God," Matt. iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14; Mark i. 14. While in this last scripture we read that "after John was given up, Jesus came into Galilee preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God," the next statement teaches that this gospel at first was mainly the good news of its near approach. The very words of Jesus are given: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is near. Repent ye, and believe in the gospel," that is, in the good news. Here we observe the proclamation of a fact, and a call to duties demanded by the fact.

(1.) The fulfilment of the time intimates that now God was about to accomplish his purpose and his prediction in the establishment of his kingdom among men. The prediction is clearly that of Daniel, who says—

> "In the days of these kings
> The God of heaven shall set up a kingdom
> Which shall never be destroyed:

> And the kingdom shall not be left to other people,
> It shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms,
> And it shall stand for ever."—Dan. ii. 44.

The near approach of this long looked for kingdom was indeed gospel, good news. It was good news to Israel, at that time groaning under the Roman yoke, and long waiting for the consolation of Israel, and for redemption in Jerusalem, Luke ii. 25, 38. It was good news to the nations which had long sat in darkness and deathshade, bowing to stocks, and crushed under the iron heels of priestcraft and despotism. The setting up of great earthly kingdoms is no gospel. The march of Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus, of Alexander and Cæsar, and all the cruel Nimrods who have made the globe their hunting-ground, and men their game, was no good news. Their tramp was but the dismal sound of havoc and horror, of desolation and death. But the approach of the kingdom of heaven, under the kingship of the Messiah, the Desire of all nations, the Prince of peace, the Son of God, and the Saviour of the world, this was good news, this was gospel indeed. Well might the angel, when proclaiming the birth of the king to the shepherds on Bethlehem's plains, say, "Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all the people. Because to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is Christ the Lord." And well might the host of angels sing, "Glory to God among the highest, and peace upon earth, and good will among men," Luke ii. 8–14.

(2.) The kingdom of God being near, the duties to

which the people are called are repentance and the belief of the good news. We are not told whether John or the Lord Jesus himself opened up to the view of their hearers the spirituality of the kingdom; or whether at this early period they left it to be gradually learned from the nature of the duties which they enforced. Repentance, or a change of mind regarding sin and regarding God, and a corresponding change of life, seems to have been the grand pre-requisite set before them so as to be prepared for the kingdom when it came. Faith in the good news was also essential; for unless they believed the proclamation thus made, they would not repent, nor be prepared for the kingdom. Here it will be observed that the gospel spoken of can never be what we now call the gospel; it is simply and clearly, "the Gospel of the kingdom," that is, the good news of its near approach. The historian Mark did not require to repeat the words "of the kingdom," in this second statement; but every one who examines the scripture will see that this is the idea intended. Thus, we find the word *gospel*, more clearly, *good news*, employed by our Lord, the word *kingdom* being understood, a practice always followed after this by Mark, ch. viii. 35, x. 29, xiii. 10, xiv. 9. On the other hand, Matthew only once leaves out the word *kingdom*, ch. xxvi. 13. He inserts it ch. iv. 23, ix. 35, xxiv. 14. This last, being parallel with Mark xiii. 10, shews that the good news there spoken of are the good news of the kingdom. However beautiful the word *Gospel*, and however desirable uniformity of rendering, yet we agree with Dr

George Campbell of Aberdeen, that the Greek word *ευαγγελιον*, in these scriptures, ought, for the sake of accuracy and intelligibleness, to be rendered good news, or glad tidings.*

This view of these scriptures, and of the clearer rendering, is amply confirmed in Luke viii. 1. Neither Luke nor John ever use the word *ευαγγελιον*, *gospel*, in their memoirs of Christ. In this scripture are two verbs, the one, *κηρυσσων*, *preaching*, a generic, the other a specific, *ευαγγελιζομενος*, *bringing good news*. What the good news are we are also told. Jesus "went throughout city and village, preaching and bringing the good news of the kingdom of God." Compare Luke ix. 2 with ch. x. 9, and Matt. x. 7. Thus we conclude that what was called *gospel*, or *good news*, in the lifetime of Christ, was mainly the approach of the kingdom of God. Many things illustrative of the kingdom, Jesus was again and again teaching by parables, as in Matt. xiii. In these we have not the glad tidings, but the mysteries, of the kingdom, ver. 11. After his resurrection, we find him speaking to his disciples of things concerning the kingdom of God, Acts i. 3. Very different would be the disclosures now made, and very different the views of the disciples. Hence when he commanded them to preach the Gospel to every creature, this would in itself embrace much more than formerly, as we have it in Mark xvi. 15. Yet still a cloud was over their minds, as we may see

* Campbell's Preliminary Dissertations to the Four Gospels; Diss. v., p. ii.

from their question regarding the restoration of the kingdom to Israel, Acts i. 6. After his ascension, however, when Pentecost was fully come, and the Spirit of God descended, then came the long looked for kingdom ; yea, it came, as Jesus himself had said, *in power*, Mark ix. 1. Then the kingdom of God was seen, Luke ix. 27. Yea, the Son of Man himself was seen, the king coming in his kingdom, Matt. xvi. 28. He was seen then to have taken possession of his kingdom at the right hand of God, and by his Spirit to take possession of a throne in the hearts of men, and thus to begin that long looked for age or dispensation on earth, which had been the grand object of all the Old Testament preparations and predictions. Thus the good news which John and Jesus himself had preached are now accomplished ; the kingdom of God, which three years before was at hand, is now come.

This event would of itself change the character and proclamation of the good news of the kingdom, and therefore of what is called *Gospel*, during the life of Christ. The news now would be that the kingdom had come. The proclamation now would be the great facts by means of which God had brought this about —namely, the life and death, resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus. From this hour, accordingly, these facts become the good news, the Gospel, now to be published to every creature, according to Christ's command, as in Mark xvi. 15. And so we find it in the preaching of the apostles, and in their writings, Acts viii. 12, xix. 8, xx. 24, 25, xxviii. 23, 31.

2d. The Gospel, or good news, of the king.

This is what is now distinctively called the Gospel. The king is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, appointed by his Father to be the Redeemer and Ruler of mankind. The Gospel of the king, accordingly, is the good news of the redemption of man by the Lord Jesus Christ; the good news of all that God has done in the life and death, resurrection and ascension, atonement and intercession, of his only-begotten Son, in order to the salvation of the world, and, consequently, in order to the establishment of heaven's kingdom among men. As the life of Christ is therefore *the Gospel*, the records of his life may well be called *the Gospels*.

Such is the Gospel which is now to engage our meditations. Such are the good news which Peter calls "the word of the Gospel," and Paul "the Gospel of the grace of God," Acts xv. 7; xx. 24. These two scriptures we have singled out as being the only two in which the word *Gospel* is found in the Acts. The word is also used by Peter in his first Epistle, ch. iv. 17; and by John in Rev. xiv. 6. All the other examples are in the letters of Paul, who uses it no seldomer than twenty-eight times without any qualifying term, from which we learn it had become very familiar and expressive to the minds of the first Christians. The life and work of Jesus Christ had become to them the only news worthy of being designated "*το ευαγγελιον—the good news*"—as they are now to us the only news worthy of being called *Gospel*.

CHAPTER III.

THE RELATIONS AND FEATURES OF THE GOSPEL.

THE relations and the features of the Gospel are inseparably blended, so that while they are distinct in themselves, they need not be viewed apart. The relations of the Gospel appertain to its proprietorship, answering to the inquiry, to whom and to what it belongs. The features are portrayed in these relations, setting forth the varied aspects in which it is presented to the view of men. The relations of the Gospel are seen in its being called the Gospel of God and of Christ, of grace and of glory, of salvation and peace, the Gospel of the apostles, the everlasting Gospel. In these we have the answer to the inquiry, to whom and to what the Gospel belongs. The features of the Gospel, as seen in these relations, are the divinity of its origin, its graciousness and gloriousness, its soul-saving, peace-giving power, its apostolic authority and trusteeship, and its eternal duration.

It is for us, as inquirers after truth, as students of the ways of God, and, above all, as souls whose eternal happiness hangs upon this Gospel, to view and review these relations and features, and from each of them to

learn those rich and precious lessons which they are designed and fitted to convey to the minds of men. In so doing we shall consider the Gospel in relation to its author and its mediator, to its blessings and its trustees, to time and eternity.

I. The Author of the Gospel is God.

This essential and fundamental truth shines on every page of the Gospel, and is directly taught in being called the gospel of God, the gospel of the grace of God, the gospel of the glory of God. Each of these let us now consider.

1. God being the author of the Gospel, it is called the Gospel of God, or God's good news.

This term is used in Scripture seven times, once by Peter, 1st Epistle iv. 17; and the other times by Paul, 1 Thess ii. 2, 8, 9; Rom. i. 1; xv. 16; 2 Cor. xi. 7. Peter's words are: "What shall be the end of those who obey not the Gospel of God?"

(1.) The Gospel of God, or the good news of God, is a term which presents to us the cheering and glorious truth of its divine origin. It reminds us that the facts and truths on which we are called to build our hopes of eternal life are not of man but of God. They are the good news of God himself to the children of men. The Gospel is God's, because it is good news both from him and about him. It is God's, because it is good news of his wisdom and power, righteousness and love, engaged in behalf of sinful, ruined man. The truths which it makes known are the glad tidings of what

God himself has purposed and planned, promised and accomplished, through his Son Jesus Christ, and by his holy Spirit, in order to save sinners, Rom. i. 1–4.

(2.) Paul glories in the thought that the Gospel which he preached was not according to man; and so may we. Gal. i. 11. Who but the all-wise God could have devised; who but the Allmighty could have achieved, a plan of deliverance from sin and wrath and everlasting fire, such as the Gospel?

(3.) The truth that the Gospel is not only good news, but God's good news, is enough to beget the strongest faith in the most unbelieving heart, and to banish all doubts of the willingness of God to save the chief of sinners.

2. The Gospel being a display of the favour of God towards men, is called the Gospel of his grace; that is, the good news of his favour.

This term is found once in the words of Paul—"To witness the gospel of the grace of God," Acts xx. 24.

(1.) The words "*Gospel of grace*" may be rendered "gracious Gospel;" as "words of grace" are "gracious words," Luke iv. 22. But we prefer our present rendering, which is the same as in Paul's address—"I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace"—otherwise, "his gracious word," Acts xx. 32.

(2.) The favour of God towards mankind is a joyful theme. And this is the first great truth of the joyful news which the Gospel makes known, as stated by our Saviour himself in these golden words—"God so loved

the world." The Gospel, then, is truly good news of favour, good news of grace, of the grace of God, of the favour of the Allmighty towards the race of man. It is the glory and the strength of the Gospel that this grace is the spring of all its soul-refreshing, saving streams. Hence Christ is the gift of grace. Hence election, adoption, justification, and all the blessings of salvation, are alike of grace—free, rich, sovereign grace. Hence all that God has done for man in the Gospel is, "that he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness towards us in Christ Jesus." This truth is fitted to cheer the saddest soul, to gladden the most desponding heart.

3. The Gospel being a display of the glory of God, is called the Gospel of his glory, or his glorious Gospel; that is, good news of glory, or glorious good news.

(1.) This term is found once in the words of Paul, 1 Tim. i. 11, in our version rendered, "The glorious gospel of the blessed God," but more literally like the rendering of Acts xx. 24, and 2 Cor. iv. 6—"The gospel of the glory of the happy God." Reading the three alike, we have the gospel of grace, the gospel of glory, and the knowledge of glory; and all in relation to God. Comparing the two last, we observe that the one is inseparable from the other. Whence do we get "a knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," but from the Gospel—"the good news of the glory of God" in the face of Jesus Christ? With

pleasure we find that this literal rendering, which we much prefer, agrees with Wycliffe's, Tyndale's, Cranmer's, and the Rheims version. Ours is borrowed from Whittingham's, usually called the Geneva version.

(2.) From this term we learn that as the Gospel is good news of grace—the grace of God—so is it good news of glory—the glory of God. As the former teaches that the Gospel is a display of God's favour towards mankind, the latter teaches that it is also a display of his own glory. The Gospel is good news of the glory of God's wisdom and power, holiness and righteousness, truth and love, in the contrivance and accomplishment of a plan of the brightest glory in the redemption of Adam's race. In the Gospel, more than in the law, or in any other revelation of God, do we see the glory of his perfections. When Moses prayed, "Shew me thy glory," he was taught that the glory of God consisted in more than his visible presence; and that, while he and no man could see God's face and live, yet he should see God's favour, and in this be shewn his glory. Hence the answer—"I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will call by the name of Jehovah before thee, and I will be gracious to whom I may be gracious, and I will have mercy on whom I may have mercy." And this, we find, was fulfilled, as may be seen in the following narrative. Compare Exod. xxxiii. 17–23, and ch. xxxiv. throughout. The full glory of God's goodness, and of all his name, was not seen till unveiled in the Gospel. Moses saw this glory in a cloud; we see it in the Sun of

righteousness. Israel saw a reflection of this glory in the law, and in the face of Moses; we see it in the Gospel of glory, in the face of Jesus Christ.

(3.) The words "*Gospel of glory*" being rendered "glorious Gospel," it behoves us to consider this idea. As the gospel of grace is a gracious gospel, so the gospel of glory must be a glorious gospel. In the same way, freedom of glory is glorious freedom; and a body of glory, a glorious body, Rom. viii. 21; Fil. iii. 21. Of all the revelations God has given to man, there is none more glorious than the Gospel.

(4.) The special view given of Jehovah in the words before us demands attention. Why he is called "the happy God;" and why in special relation to the Gospel. As the word *blessed* has two very distinct meanings—namely, *happy* and *praised*, the Greek has two words clearly answering to each—namely, μακαριος, *happy*, and ευλογητος, *praised* or *blessed*. Both terms are applied to God. Thus, in Mark xiv. 61, the high priest asks Jesus if he were "the Son, του ευλογητου, *of the blessed*." So also with the same word we read, "God *blessed* for ever," Rom. ix. 5. That is literally, well spoken of, praised. But in the scripture before us, the word is, μακαριος, *happy*, the same used by our Saviour in the beatitudes, and descriptive of personal state, individual condition; a state of actual enjoyment, whether praised and blessed by others or not. Hence we prefer to read, "the happy God." The same word is rendered *happy* in John xiii. 17; Acts xxvi. 2; Rom. xiv. 22; 1 Cor. vii. 40; 1 Pet. iii. 14; iv. 14.

In one other scripture the same term is applied to God, although also rendered *blessed*—"The happy and only potentate," 1 Tim. vi. 15. Happiness is an interesting thought in relation to Jehovah; an element which, all may see, is essential to his Godhead. As God has perfections above all other beings, so must he have happiness incomparable. As all his perfections are boundless, so must be his happiness. As a being infinitely happy in himself, his happiness is independent of his creatures. And yet a part of his happiness is the happiness of creation. While boundlessly and unchangeably happy in himself, it is the glory of his goodness and his grace that he has ever sought the happiness of his sinful, and, therefore, unhappy creature man. Had he allowed mankind to perish in their sin, we cannot suppose that this would have marred his happiness. He could soon have created another race. Hence the glory of the Gospel in bringing to view this great truth, that the happy God is also rich in mercy, and has loved man with great love, and has shewn the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness unto us in Christ Jesus. Thus, with beautiful propriety, the Gospel is styled, "the good news of the glory of the happy God." See Notes.

(5.) The truth that the Gospel is not only good news of grace, but also of glory; and not only the good news of God, but good news of the glory of the happy God; and, accordingly, that it is a manifestation alike of his own happiness and glory, and of the greatness of his grace in desiring to make man happy like himself; this great truth is fitted to banish every

fear, and to uproot every doubt, and to inspire every soul seeking salvation with the firm faith, the cheerful confidence, and the happy hope of pardon and peace, light and life, grace and glory in God, through Jesus Christ for ever.

II. The Mediator of the Gospel is the Lord Jesus Christ.

This great and precious truth is seen in all the facts of the Gospel, and is taught in its being called the gospel of Christ—the gospel of the glory of Christ. Each of these let us now consider.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ being the agent of Jehovah in the accomplishment of the Gospel plan, it is called the Gospel of Christ, or Christ's good news.

(1.) This term is found in Scripture thirteen times; once in Mark i. 1, and the other times in the writings of Paul—1 Thess. iii. 2; 2 Thess. i. 8; Gal. i. 7; Rom. i. 9, 16; xv. 19, 29; 1 Cor. ix. 12, 18; 2 Cor. ii. 12; ix. 13; x. 14; Fil. i. 27. Among these, in Scholz's collation of Greek MSS., the name *Christ* is left out in Rom. i. 16; and the word *Gospel* in Rom. xv. 29. One example we give—"The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God, and on those who obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ," 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

(2.) As we glory that the gospel is the good news of God the Father, so may we also glory that it is the good news of Christ the Son. As it is the Father's because he is the author, it is the Son's because he is the agent of the Father, the Mediator of God and of men, the middle one, accomplishing the plan of Jehovah in the redemption of the race. More particularly, the gospel is Christ's, because he is its chief subject, its great and glorious theme. The gospel is all about Christ. It is the good news of his mediation and mission, incarnation and birth, life and death, resurrection and ascension, atonement and intercession, kingdom and glory. Christ is the Alfa and Omega, the beginning and ending of the plan of salvation. He is the chief leader and finisher of the faith, leading on the van and bringing up the rear of all the truths belonging to the redemption of man. He is the great teacher who, coming from the bosom of the Father, unveiled his love as it had never been seen before. He is the great, the only mediator who, standing in the middle between a holy God and sinful men, has done all, and suffered all, and said all, that was necessary to the accomplishment of his Father's will in order to man's redemption.

(3.) The truth that the gospel is not only good news, but Christ's good news, the glad tidings of him who is the way, the truth and the life, the only way for man to God, is fitted to gladden every heart, and to rouse every soul to undelaying attention and unshaken trust.

2. The Gospel being a display of the glory of Christ, is called the gospel of his glory, or his glorious gospel; that is, good news of Christ's glory, or his glorious good news.

(1.) This term is found once in the words of Paul, 2 Cor. iv. 4, in our version rendered "the glorious gospel of Christ," but literally, "the gospel of the glory of Christ," as 1 Tim. i. 11. The whole passage is, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of unbelievers in order that the enlightening of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, might not shine to them." The same also is the rendering of the term in Wycliffe, Cranmer, and the Rheims. The Geneva version and ours have followed Tyndale, who in this departs from his own literal rendering of verse 6, and 1 Tim. i. 11. It is interesting to observe that, as at verse 6, we have "the enlightening of the knowledge of the glory of God," so here we have "the enlightening of the gospel of the glory of Christ," thus confirming the translation which we prefer.

(2.) From this term we learn that, as the gospel is good news of the glory of the Father, so is it good news of the glory of the Son. And the two are inseparable; for, as the glory of God in the gospel is in the face of Jesus Christ, herein the glory of Christ must shine with unspeakable lustre. As the Father is glorified in the Son, so is the Son glorified by and with the Father. And as the Father hath glory in himself,

so hath he given to the Son to have glory in himself. Hence in the scripture before us the apostle sets forth not only the gospel as good news of the glory of Christ, but also Christ as the image of God; so that in him we have the representation of Jehovah the author of the gospel; and in the gospel we see the glory both of its author and its agent. As in the gospel we have the good news of the mediation and mission and entire work of Christ; and as in this work we behold the brightest reflection of the glory of God—here is good news of glory; the glory of mediation and redemption, of mediating between God and his creature man, of the mediator laying down his life and taking it again, and thereby bringing man back to his Maker, and establishing an everlasting kingdom of righteousness and purity, peace and love. The fleshly mind sees little glory in Christ and his gospel, because of the lowliness of his worldly position, and the humblingness of his words and ways. But to the spiritual mind these very features are a glory. To the carnal mind, Christ's life is a stumbling-block; his death a rock of offence; his cross foolishness. But to the mind enlightened from above, all this is both good news, and good news of glory. Christ in his manifestations being "the power of God and the wisdom of God," and being to those who believe in him "wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption;" all this is glory, yea, the brightest glory ever viewed by man. It is the glory of majesty and meekness, power and love, condescension and endur-

ance, such as earth saw never; all at work in order to the restoration and eternal life of the children of men. It is the glory of the Sun of righteousness shining upon a dark, blighted, cheerless world with salvation in his wings. As all this glory is reflected from the cross, well may every one join in the exultation of Paul, "Let it not be that I should boast but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world is crucified to me and I to the world."

(3.) The truth that the gospel is both good news of Christ and good news of his glory, of the glory of him who is the Son of God and the Saviour of the world, is fitted to lead every one, not only not to be ashamed of it, but to trust with fearless faith, and to boast in it with boundless admiration and delight.

III. The blessings of the Gospel are manifold and unspeakably precious.

These are pardon of sin and peace with God, election out of the world and adoption into the family of God, the indwelling of the holy Spirit and the heirship of eternal glory; all of which and kindred blessings are the portion of those who believe the gospel. This is not the place for enlargement on these blessings. We would dwell more fully on two, in which all the others are included, and which are named in connection with the word *gospel*, which is the particular object of our present enquiry. Because of these two blessings the Gospel is called the gospel of salvation, and the gospel of peace.

1. Salvation being the great blessing which the Gospel brings to lost and ruined man, it is called the good news of salvation.

(1.) This term is used once by Paul—"Ye having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" —Efes. i. 13. The "word of truth" is the same which the apostle elsewhere calls "a faithful word"—namely, the good news that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." The "gospel of salvation" then is the "word of truth" here spoken of; the one term denoting its character as the word of God who cannot lie; the other setting forth the glorious blessing which this word brings to man.

(2.) The gospel is good news of salvation, because it comes to man lost in sin, and in danger of everlasting death, and brings to him deliverance; deliverance from sin and wrath and death; deliverance wrought by God himself in the person of Jesus Christ his Son. For the same reason it is called "the word of salvation," and "the salvation of God"—Acts xiii. 26; xxviii. 28. This is the word which is sent to all men, Jews and Gentiles; the good news commanded to be preached to every creature.

(3.) As it is "the salvation of God," because he is its author, so is it the salvation of believers, because they receive it at the hand of God with thankful hearts. Hence Paul calls it "the gospel of *your* salvation." And what makes it *yours?* God's gift and your faith. Let the greatest sinner on earth believe in Jesus, in so

doing he receives this salvation, therefore it becomes his. In receiving the Saviour, we necessarily receive the salvation. When Jesus becomes ours, the salvation is ours.

(4.) As this salvation embraces deliverance from death, the gospel is also called "the word of life" —Fil. ii. 16. Life everlasting is the gift of God to man in Christ. The gospel therefore is both "the word of life" and "the way of salvation"—Acts v. 20; xvi. 17.

(5.) The truth that the gospel is good news of salvation; of salvation from sin our worst foe, our greatest danger; and from death eternal, the wages of sin; and consequently of life everlasting with God in glory—is enough to rouse every one who knows that he has a soul defiled with sin and therefore in danger of eternal fire, to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold of this, the only refuge. "Incline your ear, hear and your soul shall live."

2. Peace being the precious fruit of the salvation which the gospel brings, the good news of salvation is necessarily good news of peace.

(1.) The apostle in exhorting believers to put on the whole armour of God, amongst other accoutrements reminds them to "have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace," Efes. vi. 15—These words seem to imply that the Christian has not only many a foe to fight, but also many a rugged road and thorny path to tread; and that accordingly the best

preparation for all the difficulties of the Christian warfare and pilgrimage is to have the mind thoroughly imbued with the rich and strengthening facts and truths of the gospel, the good tidings of peace.

(2.) This is the only scripture in the Greek Testament where the gospel is called "good tidings of peace;" but the verb derived from the noun rendered *gospel* is used in setting forth the same precious truth, and is employed in Acts x. 36; Efes. ii. 17; Rom. x. 15. There we find "peace proclaimed through Jesus Christ"—yea, Jesus himself "proclaiming peace to those afar off and to those near;" and his servants proclaiming peace; and their feet declared to be beautiful, being shod with such a preparation, and themselves bringing tidings so welcome and cheering.

(3.) The gospel bringing peace is truly good news, glad tidings. News of war is no good news, even between man and man; much more between God and man. But when the war is ended and peace proclaimed, here indeed is glad tidings of great joy. Peace between God and man is one of the gracious designs and precious fruits of the gospel. It comes from God to man with conditions of peace. It brings pardon of past rebellion, and peace with God, to every soul who lays down his weapons and returns to his allegiance. It proclaims peace to every sinner who will bow to the sceptre of God's well-beloved and only-begotten Son. Hence "peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ" is the sure result of faith in the blood which alone speaks peace, and brings justification and cleansing

—Rom. v. 1. It is also to be remembered that the same gospel which brings good news of peace with God, is the only effectual means which will ever ensure peace among men. This the heavenly host foresaw when, announcing the dawn of the gospel day in the birth of the Saviour, they sang the profetic song, "Glory to God among the highest, on earth peace, and good will among men."

(4.) The gospel being good news of peace with God is also called "the word of reconciliation;" and the work of the preacher, "the ministry of reconciliation;" intimating that men while in sin are estranged from their Maker, but upon believing in Jesus they are reconciled, and so restored to peace and friendship. Hence the call of the gospel of peace, "the word of reconciliation," is, "Be ye reconciled to God"—2 Cor. v. 19, 20. Who desiring peace with God will refuse the call?

A fuller view of the varied blessings which the gospel brings to men is reserved to a consideration of its glories. Meanwhile it is our joy to know that having Christ we have salvation from sin and peace with God; and having these we have grace and glory; yea, no good thing will be withheld from those who believe in the gospel and walk uprightly.

IV. THE DURATION OF THE GOSPEL IS FOR EVER.

(1.) This we gather from the words of the apostle John, *everlasting* gospel—Rev. xiv. 6. "I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the

everlasting gospel to bring good news to those who dwell upon the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people." Dr George Campbell thinks that the good news here meant is the proclamation of ver. 7, "The hour of his judgment is come." Much as we are disposed to bow to the authority of this excellent critic, we do not see how the good news of this proclamation can be called everlasting. The passage seems to be a prediction of the world-wide proclamation of the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ, paving the way for the more speedy downfall of Babylon, as announced in the next prediction.

(2.) Be this as it may, the gospel of Jesus Christ is everlasting. In other words, it will continue till the end of the world as the remedy, the only remedy for sinful man. Other plans may last for a while, pretending to be good news, professing to supply the wants, heal the woes, and save the souls of men; but they are all deceptions, which while they have their day, cheating but not saving, they cannot last for ever. But the gospel of Jesus Christ, being the word of truth and the good news of God himself, is everlasting. Being everlasting, it is not to be superseded by any other. Hence says Paul—"Though we or an angel from heaven preach contrary to what we have preached to you, let him be accursed." "Another gospel," says he, "is not another, but there are some who trouble you and wish to overturn the gospel of Christ"—Gal. i. 6-9; 2 Cor. xi. 4.

(3.) We have reason to deplore the thousands who

have been brought under the curse of another gospel, through ignorance of the true, the only, the everlasting gospel. Let every one who hears or reads these words see to it that he looks for pardon of sin not through works but through faith; that he leans not on his own righteousness but on the righteousness of God in Christ. Let every one remember that as the gospel is everlasting, there never will be another way of salvation to men. Hence there is no other name, no other foundation, no other way but Christ. Who knowing this, and seeing the evil of sin, and the worth of his soul, will neglect the gospel and perish, or flee to any other hiding-place and be overwhelmed in endless woe?

V. The trusteeship of the Gospel in the preaching and writings of the apostles of Christ.

(1.) This circumstance is set forth by the apostle Paul, who speaking of the gospel, thrice calls it, "my gospel,"—Rom. ii. 16; xvi. 25; 2 Tim. ii. 8; and coupling the names of Silas and Timothy with his own, thrice calls it, "our gospel"—1 Thess. i. 5; 2 Thess. ii. 14; 2 Cor. iv. 3. This language, which at first seems remarkable, is worthy of notice. How can the gospel of God and of Christ be the gospel of the apostles? Clearly thus: God being the author, and Christ the mediator, the apostles are the trustees. Into the hands of the eleven this trust was put personally when the Lord Jesus charged them to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature—

Mark xvi. 15, 16. Into the hands of Paul it was put as directly by supernatural revelation—Gal. i. 11, 12. Between himself and Peter, Paul draws this distinction, that he, πεπιστευται, *was entrusted* with the gospel of the uncircumcision, and Peter with that of the circumcision—Gal. ii. 7. Here clearly we see the idea of trusteeship. To his trusteeship of the gospel, Paul again and again refers. So deeply did he feel the responsibility of faithfulness to his trust that he says, "As we were approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak; not as pleasing men, but the God who proveth our hearts"—1 Thess. ii. 4. This trust he also speaks of as a stewardship, showing the obligation under which he was laid to preach the preaching which Christ had bidden him. "For though I preach," (or as the word is, "bring the good tidings,") "I have nothing to boast of, for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is to me, if I preach not," (or, "bring not the good tidings.") "For if I do this willingly, I have reward, but if unwillingly, I have been entrusted with a stewardship"—1 Cor. ix. 15–18. See also 1 Tim. i. 11; Tit. i. 3.

(2.) The other apostles, like Paul, were doubtless faithful to their trust, preaching the good tidings of salvation while they lived; and before they died charging their fellow-labourers to keep that which was also entrusted to them, and to commit the same to faithful men who would be fit to teach others also. Thus did Paul, as we find from his words to Timothy—1 Tim. vi. 20; 2 Tim. ii. 2. And thus also we find Peter en-

deavouring that the believers might always have remembrance of these things after his departure—2 Pet. i. 12–18.

(3.) Besides this, some of the apostles and servants of Christ, moved by the Spirit of inspiration, have committed this gospel to writing, both in the life of Christ and in the other records of the New Testament, which we have in our hands. Thus the treasure which at first was put into earthen vessels is now deposited in the ark of the New Covenant, safe as if engraved on eternal brass. This ark is now in the keeping of the whole church of God, so that as the profets, and after them the nation of Israel, were the keepers and trustees of the law, and all the records of the Old Testament; so the apostles and after them the churches of Christ were the trustees and keepers of the gospel, and all the records of the New Testament.

(4.) Thus with Paul, every Christian, with the word of God in both hand and heart, may say, "The gospel of God is *my* gospel;" and the whole Church of Christ, "The gospel of Christ is *our* gospel." Those make it theirs who give it a place in their hearts. It is their hope, their joy and their boast.

(5.) The gospel being thus a trust committed to the people of God, every disciple of Christ, as well as every servant of the Lord, is bound to remember the stewardship entrusted to him, and to be faithful to Christ and to souls. Let every Christian therefore use every means in his power to make known the gospel to all around.

Concluding Remarks.

1. Thus much on the relations and features of the Gospel. From this survey we have seen that it is the good news of God, of his grace and his glory, he being its author; that it is the good news of Christ and of his glory, he being its mediator; that it is the good news of salvation and peace, these being its blessings; that it is everlasting good news, bringing as it does the only salvation from sin and wrath, and a salvation which is eternal; and that it is the good news of the apostles of Jesus Christ, they being appointed his trustees to publish it to the end of the world, as they have done in their preaching and writings.

2. The general outline here given is fitted to produce a hallowing and a happy influence on the mind. Whether we view these features of the Gospel separately or connectedly, we find floods of light shed upon the plan of redemption; truths fitted alike to strengthen the faith of the believer, and to lead the unbeliever to Jesus. From them we see the Gospel to be an object of the loftiest attractions, something to draw every mind to its study, to engage every heart with its beauties, and to ensure the confidence, veneration and enthusiasm of the children of men. Being the medium of blessings more precious than any which the world can bestow, who will be so blind to his own well-being as to trifle with his soul and neglect the only salvation?

CHAPTER IV.

AN OUTLINE OF THE GOSPEL ROLL.

WHAT is the Gospel? is a great question, the answer to which every one must know in order to pardon of sin, peace with God and eternal salvation. One of the best ways of getting a thorough understanding of it is to read and write down in due order the various scriptures where it is most clearly set forth, where the good news of salvation, the glad tidings of great joy are most fully and pointedly stated. As in olden times books were commonly in the form of rolls, somewhat like our maps on rollers, we have written out these various scriptures in what we deem the best arrangement, and propose to call them *the Gospel roll.* In this form we should rejoice to see them printed on broadsheets in large type, and hung on the walls of every cottage and kitchen or parlour. By this means many an eye might see and read the gospel, and many a soul get to understand and love it who otherwise would pay no regard to the great salvation.

I. THE GREAT TRUTHS OF THE GOSPEL ROLL.

1.—*The love of God in the gift of his Son to the world.*—John iii. 16, 17.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-

begotten Son, that every one who believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent his Son into the world, not that he might judge the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

2.—*The coming of Christ to save sinners.*—1 Tim. i. 15.

"This is a faithful word and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."

3.—*The death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.*—1 Cor. xv. 1–4.

"Brethren, I make known to you the gospel which I preached to you. . . For I delivered to you among the first things that which I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures."

4.—*Redemption from the curse through Christ's death on the cross.*—Gal. iii. 10–14.

"Christ hath bought us off from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one who is hanged on a tree: that the blessing of Abraham in Jesus Christ might come unto the nations; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

5.—*The Gospel God's power to save, being a revelation of his righteousness in saving.*—Rom. i. 16, 17.

"I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believeth. For in it the righteousness of God by faith

is revealed unto faith: as it is written, The righteous shall live by faith."

6.—*The manifestation, terms, freeness, and blessings of the righteousness of God in the atonement of Christ.*—Rom. iii. 19–31.

"And now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the profets. The righteousness of God, through the faith of Jesus Christ, is unto all and upon all who believe. For there is no difference; for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, in order to a declaration of his righteousness," &c.

7.—*Reconciliation to God through Christ being made sin for us.*—2 Cor. v. 18–21.

"And all the things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; how that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them, and hath put in us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you for Christ, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

8.—*Everlasting life the gift of God in Christ to the children of men.*—1 John v. 9–12.

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God

is greater; because this is the witness of God which he hath witnessed concerning his Son. He who believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he who believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not on the witness which God hath witnessed concerning his Son. And this is the witness, that God hath given to us everlasting life; and this life is in his Son. He who hath the Son hath the life; he who hath not the Son of God hath not the life."

II. The Great Lessons of the Gospel Roll.

As we unfold this roll to learn the good tidings it contains, we observe that the first word is Love,—the love of God to the race of man, love shown in the gift of his Son for man's salvation. On further unfolding the roll, we learn that according to the will of God, Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners. If we read on, we find that in order to save he died for our sins, and was buried and rose again. And does any one ask, What did his death accomplish? The answer is, Redemption from the curse of the law has been gained by Christ's death on the cross. What then? The gospel being a revelation of God's righteousness, is God's power to save every one who believeth. And what is God's righteousness in the gospel? It is Christ set forth to be a propitiation for sin through faith in his blood. Being thus set forth, what then? The righteousness is unto all, for there is no difference; and it is upon all who believe, inasmuch as they are justified freely. Being justified freely, what now is their con-

dition in relation to God? Answer—Reconciled; for God was in Christ reconciling sinners to himself. Being reconciled to God, what then? Answer—Having Christ, they have eternal life. For this is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Accordingly he who hath the Son hath the life.

Such is the Gospel roll. Such are the good news of God through Jesus Christ. Such is the way of salvation. In glancing over this roll we observe that as the first word is love, the last is life, the love of God working the life of man; eternal love opening up for sinful men the way to eternal life, and all through Christ. In this roll of glory and of wonders we see the love, power, and righteousness of God engaged in behalf of man. We see Jesus the gift of his Father, and eternal life a gift in him. We see the coming, death, and resurrection of Christ in order to accomplish the purpose of God to save. We see salvation from perishing, redemption from the curse, justification from sin, and reconciliation to God the fruit of Christ's work. And lastly, we see believing in Jesus the requirement of God on the part of men in order to their enjoyment of all these blessings.

Thus the gospel is a roll of wonders, wonders of grace and of glory; a proclamation of good news, the best ever brought to the children of men. Here is love and life; love to souls deserving wrath, life for sinners doomed to die; the love of a holy and righteous God providing everlasting life for sinful, rebellious

men. We would ask, seeing that faith, or trust in the Son of God, is the simple and easy, the reasonable and necessary demand of the gospel, in order to meet the love, and get the life of God, will you, can you refuse?

As we purpose taking up these scriptures one by one, in order to unfold the roll, we begin now with the first, fervently praying that the blessing of the God of love may guide our meditations, so as to be the everlasting life of many souls.

CHAPTER V.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF THE LOVE OF GOD, IN THE GIFT OF HIS SON TO MANKIND.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that every one who believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world that he might judge the world; but that the world through him might be saved."—JOHN iii. 16, 17.

THE love of God to mankind, as seen in the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to their salvation, is the first great truth of the gospel. This truly is gospel, good news from, and about God; good news of love, of the love of our Maker towards his creature man. It would be no good news to be told that God hated the world, or that, disregarding it, he had left it to itself. But to hear that he has loved it, and shown his love in so many wonderful ways, this is good news indeed. The love of God to man is a great truth, a glorious reality, being the spring of all the blessings of the race, and therefore the source of the highest blessing, salvation.

The words of the scripture now under review, present this great truth in beautiful and simple language. They are worthy to be written in letters of gold, on the walls of every church and every house; worthy

of being engraved on the tablet of every heart. As far as our knowledge goes, these words, more than any other, have been a spring of peace and joy to anxious inquirers, a source of sweet repose and lasting gladness to many a weary, seeking, sinking soul. The past ensures us that millions more will here find rest and peace.

The many precious truths here taught, may all be comprised under four leading thoughts, out of which the others flow: namely, the love of God to the world —the gift of this love—the design of the gift—the evidence of the design.

I. The Love of God to the World.

Here two fields of inquiry are open to our view—namely, the world, and the love; the world loved by God, and the love with which God has loved the world.

1. The world loved by God.

1st, The word *world* being used both literally to denote the globe, and figuratively to denote its inhabitants—the family of man, every one may see that the latter is its meaning here. In the same manner the words house and country, and also the name of a land, or of a city, are sometimes used to denote the people residing in them.

2d, The word *world* being used sometimes limitedly, and sometimes unlimitedly, the great question now before us is, whether the world here denotes the race of

man at large, or only a portion of the race. There being two opinions on this matter, it is necessary that we calmly and carefully weigh the evidence, so that our conclusion may be in accordance with Scripture, and therefore with the mind of God.

3d, The evidence we have to weigh is twofold: namely, the Scripture use of the word, and the distinction made in the text between the world loved, and all who believe.

(1.) The Scripture use of the word *world*.

1. Limitedly, it means sometimes the Gentiles in distinction from the Jews. "Now, if their fall be the riches of the world," Rom. xi. 11–15. Sometimes the ungodly in distinction from the people of God. "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself to us, and not to the world?" John xiv. 17, 19, 22, 27, 31, and many more. Once it is used indefinitely and hyperbolically for many, "Behold the world is gone after him," John xii. 19.

2. Unlimitedly, it is employed to denote mankind without distinction of nation or condition; and therefore it includes Jews and Gentiles, the people of God and the ungodly; in other words, the race of Adam, the genus man, the class of intelligent beings called mankind. This is to be observed, that when the family of man, at large, is called the world, the race is viewed as wandering from God, as living in darkness, estrangement, and sin. Thus mankind being in darkness because of wandering from God, Christ says of himself, as sent by his Father to bring back the be-

nighted wanderers, "I am the light of the world"—that is, of men. And of his own disciples, as sent by him on the same errand, "Ye are the light of the world"—that is, of men. Again, mankind being estranged from God because of sin, what is the wonderful sight presented in the mediatorship of his Son, "but God in Christ reconciling the world to himself"—that is, bringing the race back to his friendship and favour. And what is the character of his Son in thus accomplishing his Father's will, but "the Lamb of God bearing the sin of the world"—that is, of the race of man. And what is the condition of the family needing all this work in order to its deliverance? Not one can say, I have not sinned. "Every mouth is stopped, and the whole world become guilty before God"—that is, the whole race of mankind is under condemnation, for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God, John viii. 12; Matt. v. 14; 2 Cor. v. 19; John i. 29; Rom. iii. 19. In all these scriptures we understand the word *world* to denote mankind as a race, without any individual distinctions.

3. Limitedly or unlimitedly, this is to be observed, that as the Jews are never called the world in distinction from the Gentiles; so the church of Christ, the people of God, are never called the world in distinction from the ungodly. The very reverse we have seen to be the case. As soon tell us that the Gentiles are called Jews; or the Jews, Gentiles; as tell us that the world is ever called the church; or the church, the world.

4. When the people of God and the world are

brought together, the former are shown to be gathered out from the latter, and therefore separate from it; not of the world although in the world. Those who cease their wanderings, being called out of darkness into God's marvellous light, are chosen out of the world, and are therefore no more of the world, even as Christ is not of the world, John xv. 18, 19; xvii. 6, 9, 14, 21, 25. Who, then, will call those who are chosen out of the world by their old name, the world? God does not, Scripture does not. But not so with the ungodly, not so with unbelievers. As they still remain in darkness and disobedience, they are still called by their old name, which is common to the race. Hence the frequent distinction and contrast. Those born of God can say, "We know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." The whole world—that is, those who are not of God, still belonging to the common herd of mankind. Those born of God we hear again saying, "If any one sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins"—that is, for the sins of us who are of God,—"and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world"—that is, the whole world lying in wickedness. And again while we read in one scripture that "God shall judge the world"—that is, mankind; we read in another, "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world"—that is, those chosen out of the world shall judge those who still remain in the benighted, ruined condition of the race, 1 John v. 19; ii. 1, 2; Rom. iii. 6; 1 Cor. vi. 2; xi. 32. All

these scriptures teach us that while believers in Jesus are called by a new name, *saints, of God,* and so forth; those who still live in sin are still called by the old name, which is common to the race as inhabitants of a fallen, wandering, lost, and ruined world.

5. From all this it follows that the world spoken of in the first great proclamation of the Gospel roll is either the Gentiles in distinction from the Jews, according to Rom. xi. 11–15; or the ungodly in distinction from the people of God, according to John xiv. 22, and other scriptures; or mankind at large, according to Rom. iii. 19, and other scriptures. Those who will not grant the two former are shut up to the latter. No one will grant the two former, thereby shutting out Jews and believers. The world spoken of in John iii. 16, must therefore be the same spoken of in Rom. iii. 19, and embrace the Jews and believers as well as the Gentiles and the ungodly.

6. The world in this glorious scripture loved by God is therefore beyond all gainsaying the family of Adam, the genus man, the race which in distinction from all other races is called Mankind. You may divide and classify this big word *world* as you please. You may quarter it into continents, and call its inhabitants Asians, Europeans, Africans, and Americans; or you may group it according to features, and call them Caucasians, Mongolians, Malayans, Ethiopians, and American Indians; or you may divide it into families and conditions, and call them Jews and Gentiles, barbarians, Scythians, bond and free; or you may range

them according to the two grand distinctions which will be owned in the last day, and will stand to all eternity,—godly and ungodly: in short classify men as you may, this word *world* holds them all. As they are all inhabitants, and all sprung from one parent stock, they are mankind, they are the world which God loved.

(2.) The distinction between the world loved and those who believe and are saved.

A careful study of the text leads us to see that two classes are spoken of,—the world loved by God and those who believe in his Son. Surely no one will say that these are one and the same. The world loved is the larger body, out of which those who believe are drawn. The world loved is the race of the first Adam. Those who believe are the race of the second Adam, gathered out of the race of the first through becoming one with the second. The love of God reaches to the circumference of the outer and larger circle of the first family, in order to bring within the bounds of the inner circle of the second family every one who will receive the gift of God's love, and bow to his Son as their Saviour and their King.

Our conclusion is that the Scripture use of the word *world,* on the one hand, and the manifest distinction of the text between the world loved and those who believe, on the other, demonstrate that the world here is mankind, the race of man, the offspring of Adam.

Here, then, are good news to the children of men, to all men of all nations and peoples and tongues; to all men of

all classes and characters; to Jews and Gentiles, godly and ungodly. Belonging as they do to the common family of man, forming as they do a portion of the race inhabiting the world, they are the objects of the love of God spoken of in the Gospel roll.

2. The love with which God has loved the world.

1st, Having seen that the world loved is the race of man simply as such, not as Jews or Gentiles, not as godly or ungodly, but as the offspring of Adam, without distinction, our way is much plainer, our light is much clearer in meditation on the kind of love with which God has loved the world. This idea borne in mind removes what is to some a great mountain, namely, the thought of men perishing in their sins who are the objects of the love of God. The mountain becomes a plain when we see that the love of our text is not love to Jews or Gentiles, godly or ungodly, as such, but as men; it is not love according to national or moral distinctions; it is not love according to any individual distinction whatever between man and man; but it is love to mankind as a race of beings different from the other races both above and below them.

2d, The love of God to the world is a complex emotion, a threefold feeling. It is the love of a maker to his work, combined with the love of a father to his children, and the love of friendliness to beings in distress. The first alone embraces all his creatures; the two first, all his intelligent creatures, and therefore

angels and man in innocence; the three combined embrace man in his fallen state, and form the love spoken of.

(1.) The love of God to the world is the love of a Maker to his own workmanship.

Every workman, every author understands this feeling, whether it regards the work of the hand or of the mind; especially if the work is good, pleasurable, and valuable. As the author made the work for himself, his regard to it is such that he desires its preservation so far as necessary to accomplish the end in view. This feeling being inherent in intelligence, and in the nature of things, is common to the Allmighty Maker of all, and other authors or workers. Hence the emotion is expressed, as day after day the work of creation advanced—"God saw that it was good;" and still more when at the end of the six days' work, we read, "God saw everything which he had made, and behold it was very good." Job expresses this emotion very touchingly when, seemingly referring to the resurrection, he represents the Allmighty as longing after his work, not allowing it to be lost,—

> "Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee;
> Thou wilt have a desire to the work of thy hands."

The Hebrew is literally thou wilt long, thou wilt have a longing—as in Ps. lxxxiv. 2. God loves mankind therefore as "the work of his hands," Gen. i. 4, 31; Job xiv. 15.

(2.) The love of God to the world is fatherliness—the love of a father to his children, to beings formed in his own likeness and image.

The love of God to his own workmanship was an emotion not powerful enough in itself to preserve man from destruction. From Geology we learn that he has allowed other races of creatures, yea, even living creatures to become extinct. But his love to the higher race of man was greater, and therefore he has not allowed them to be blotted out of the roll of creation. With delight God viewed man in common with all his creatures as the workmanship of his hand. But still higher, still greater must this delight have been in man as made in his own image, and after his own likeness; that is, an intelligent and moral agent, capable of knowing and loving, and having fellowship with his Maker, and thus fitted and appointed to be lord over all the lower creatures. The delight of God in man, as the highest of his earthly creation, is strikingly set forth in the words of wisdom, as uttered by Solomon—

> "Jehovah possessed me in the beginning of his way,
> Before his works of old.
> And I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him;
> Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth;
> And my delights were with the sons of men."
>
> —Prov. viii. 22, 30, 31.

This delight of wisdom is the delight of the source of wisdom—the only wise God, who, having made man a noble being in his own image and likeness, has a delight in him as man above all the lower orders of creation. This is the delight of a father in his own children —the peculiarly endearing and thrilling emotion of

which parents only are conscious, the feeling of the parental bosom at the sight and in the consciousness of themselves being, as it were, repeated in their own offspring, seeing their own features and image reflected in the child. With such delight, no doubt, Jehovah must have looked upon our first parents as they came pure from his hands, and as they stood in their original beauty and innocence. See God's regard to man in Ps. viii. 3–9.

But when man sinned, and so deserved to be rooted out of existence, according to the sentence of death, what was to be done? Must man die? Must the race perish? God's regard to his own work, combined with delight in his own image in man, prevailed, and he determined not to destroy the race which he had exalted so high, but to forbear and provide deliverance. His fatherly love to mankind, as a race of noble intelligences, was so great, that he determined to spare the race, and to raise up out of it a new seed by the woman,—a deliverer to save all of the old seed who would believe in and obey him. Thus we view the words of God regarding man's creation in his own image, combined with the first hint of man's deliverance after his sin, as the embryo of the glorious truth unfolded in the Gospel roll, Gen. i. 26–31, iii. 15.

This fatherly love, preserving the race from extirpation, is a manifestly strong feeling in the mind of the Allmighty. Hence at the fall, when the race consisted of only two individuals, and both rebels, he so loved the world, that, instead of executing to the letter his

threatening of death, he spared them. And again, in the flood, when his wrath against their sin was so great that he swept nearly all away, he did not destroy the race, he so loved the world as to spare one family of eight souls by whom a seed might be preserved, and the race perpetuated. This motive regarding the race of man, as distinguished from other races, is the same as that which afterwards distinguished the children of Israel from the neighbouring nations. God might again and again have destroyed Israel because of their sins, as he did some of the nations around them; but he loved the race, on the one hand, and the Messiah was not yet born, on the other, therefore he bore with them long. Thus by Isaiah, he says, "Thus saith Jehovah, As the new wine is found in the cluster, and one saith, Destroy it not; for a blessing is in it: so will I do for the sake of my servants that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains; and my chosen shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there," Isa. lxv. 8, 9; Jer. xxx. 10, 11. As the cluster of grapes is preserved because of the new wine, and as the seed of Jacob because of the Messiah, so the race of Adam because of the blessing which is in it. Many a grape perishes, but not the vine; many a son of Jacob has been destroyed, but the Jews still remain; thousands, yea, millions of Adam's race have been cut off under the wrath of the Allmighty, but the race is still preserved, and, at the present day, flourishing more than it has ever done from the begin-

ning of the world. Hence, although God has allowed men, yea, millions of men to perish, he has not allowed man to perish; mankind still holds and fills the globe. And why, but because of God's love to the world, because of his fatherly regard to the creature whom he had endowed with mind after his own likeness? Fatherliness is an emotion which well expresses the kind of love with which God has loved the race of man.

(3.) The love of God to the world is the love of friendliness to beings in distress; the love of compassion to the helpless.

The benevolent heart understands by personal experience what this emotion is, when the sight of misery touches and awakens all the finer feelings of the soul, and rouses to seek and bring the needed help. And what is this emotion, but one of the features of the likeness of God in man? Thus the Allmighty pitied man as a fallen, wretched, ruined, helpless creature. He did not and could not love him because he was good, for through his rebellion and ungodliness he had become hateful and loathsome, and therefore the race deserved to perish. Man in sin is a hateful creature; as, for example, the disobedient and the deceiver, the drunkard and the unclean, the unrighteous and the cruel. Yet a loving heart pities all such because of the wretchedness and woe which their wickedness brings upon them; and pity would fain rescue them from their sins and their sorrows. And can there be a heart more loving than the heart of God? Can any man feel towards his fellow-men a pity purer and stronger

than the pity of the Allmighty? Those who know what it is to hate sin and love the sinner, to hate drunkenness and help the drunkard out of his horrible pit and miry clay, may know how God can both hate sin and love sinners; and will well understand with what kind of love a holy and righteous God could love sinful, wretched man, so as to plan and accomplish the deliverance of the race from sin and all its woes. A fine illustration of the compassion of God towards the world, we have in his pity towards the outcast child, set forth by the profet Ezekiel as a likeness of Jerusalem in her early idolatrous state. The child was anything but loveable, yet the bowels of tenderness yearned over the poor outcast, and, instead of leaving it to perish in its misery, said, Live. This was the time of love, the look of love, and the word of love. It was kindness towards feebleness, compassion towards suffering, mercy towards misery. And such is the love of God to the world, the friendliness of the Allmighty towards sinful, sorrowful, hopeless, helpless man. One of the best expressions of this love we have in the words of Paul to Titus, "the kindness and filanthropy of God"—*φιλανθρωπια*, literally, friendliness to man. We all know what a filanthropist is. There is no filanthropist like God. The Maker and Father of man has more fatherliness and friendliness towards the race than all fathers, friends, and filanthropists together, Ezek. xvi.; Tit. iii. 4.

Such, then, we understand to be the complex feeling —the threefold emotion combined in the love of God

to man, as a creature, as an intelligent creature, and as a fallen creature; as the work of his hand, as the child of his likeness, and as the helpless victim of ingratitude, disobedience, and self-destruction. And such is the love of God in the gospel, the love set forth in these glorious words, "God so loved the world."

3d, This view of the world loved, and of the love with which God has loved the world, clears away in our judgment many clouds with which this scripture has been encompassed, and sheds floods of light upon this story of divine love.

(1.) We see that the word *world* denoting the race shuts out none, while at the same time it does not hinder the possibility of any perishing, as millions already have done. It opens the door of hope to all, but forces the entrance of none.

(2.) We see that the love of God here spoken of does not necessarily include love to the godly, nor exclude hatred to evil doers. Love to the godly is the love of holiness, which is not the state of the world, but of those chosen out of the world. Hatred to the ungodly is hatred to sin, which is perfectly compatible with love to a sinful race, working in order to rescue them from sin.

4th, Some have a notion that as far as the love of God extends, so far salvation will extend; accordingly, that if the love of God were to the race, all of the race would be saved. To such we would say—

(1.) Weigh well the evidence we have given of the

Scripture use of the word *world,* and of the love with which, as we have shown, the Allmighty regards the race of man.

(2.) Consider other illustrative cases. While God loved Jacob and hated Esau, this does not imply that all the children of Jacob were believers, and all the children of Esau reprobates. While he loved the nation of Israel and not the heathen, this does not imply that all the Jews were his elect, and none of the Gentiles. So when we read, God loves the world, this does not imply that all the world loved is elect or saved. The former is his love to one tribe of men and not another. The latter is his love to the race of man at large. How did he show his love to one race above others? By giving them his written word and a knowledge of himself, while the nations around were in darkness. How has he showed his love to the race? By giving them his Son and a knowledge of himself in the fulness of time. The love and gifts of God to Israel did not save all Israel, but only those who believed and obeyed. So the love and the gifts of God to mankind do not save all mankind, but only those who believe and obey.

5th, The world-wide love of God, therefore, is perfectly consistent with his hatred of the ungodly, and with the destruction of millions of the race because of their sins. As consistent as his love to Israel with his hatred of those Israelites whose carcasses fell in the wilderness because of their sins; and with the destruction of the nation, with Jerusalem and its temple, be-

cause of their unbelief and rejection of his beloved Son. Never, therefore, let the hatred of God towards certain races and classes and characters of men, be regarded as evidence against his love to the race at large.

6th, From this branch of our subject we are led to observe, that as God is the author of our being, the former of our frames, and the Father of our spirits; that as he has both made and formed us according to his own likeness, intelligent creatures,—we are the objects of his fatherliness; and that although we have rebelled against him and deserve his eternal displeasure, yet we are the objects of his tender pity; and "he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance," for "he wishes all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." Let no gospel hearer who belongs to the world, to the race of man, doubt that the fatherliness and friendliness, the love and compassion of God embrace him and open the door of hope and the way of salvation to him. Only believe, and these blessings are yours, for you are one of the race which God has loved.

II. The gift of God's love to the world.

While love is a motion of the mind, a warm feeling of the heart, it is also an emotion,—it has its outgoings, it must bear fruit. All true love is working, giving, blessing love. Love is a fire which, while it slumbers for a time, only waits to break forth a bright and burning flame. Being "the motion of a hidden fire which glows within the breast," it makes its presence

known and its power felt by its workings and its gifts. It is so with the love of man; much more with the love of God.

In the good spell before us we see God's love giving, and the greatness of the love in the greatness of the gift. These two thoughts now invite attention.

1. The greatness of the love with which God has loved the world.

The greatness of the love is set forth in the manner, *so, thus, after this manner*, in the manner of a gift, a gift of unspeakable worth. "God *so* loved the world." This intimates love very deep and high, very long and broad, very full and strong, as is expressed in the words, "Behold what manner of love," 1 John iii. 1. Great is the kindness of God to man in the good things of creation and providence, but greater far in the blessings of redemption. The love of God shines bright to man as a creature, brighter as an intelligent creature; it burns with a flame intense to him as a fallen creature. God has loved the world much in giving us the bread which perisheth, much more in giving us the bread which endureth unto everlasting life. We are taught that the love of Christ is so great that it surpasseth knowledge. It cannot be greater than the love of the Father who is the source of love, yea, who is love itself, "for God is love." If we cannot comprehend the love of the Son, how can we comprehend the love of the Father? God's love, like himself, is high as heaven and deep as hell, its

measure longer than the earth and broader than the sea. Who, then, can scale its heights or fathom its depths? We must first know the depths of that woe from which it saves, and the heights of that glory to which it raises sinful, helpless man. And when we have done our utmost, we find the finite as powerless to grasp the infinite as a small circle to encompass a large one, as a little lake to encircle a mighty sea. We may try to reach the heights of this love, and we should try; but when we do our utmost, just as a traveller climbing the Alps, the Andes, or the Himalayas, finds the higher he gets, mountain piled upon mountain, peak upon peak, so that he cannot reach the summit; in like manner we can never reach the lofty heights of the mount of everlasting love.

2. The great gift which God in his love has bestowed upon the world.

Consider the gift itself, how given, and to whom.

1st, The gift of God to man is his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, his only-begotten Son.

The greatness of this gift we cannot fully estimate. When we try to think of it, we feel the feebleness of our minds to grasp, the weakness of our thoughts to conceive, the poverty of our words to utter the glorious reality. The gifts of God to man are many and great, but the gift of his Son outweighs them all. The whole earth with its fulness given to one man is not so great a gift as the Lord Jesus Christ. Both are facts in the history of the world; but what is the gift

of the globe to Adam compared with the gift of Christ to mankind? The Son of God is the unspeakable gift of unspeakable love.

The greatness of the gift of Christ is seen from three considerations; namely, The greatness of his person, the Son of God, his only-begotten Son, the image of the invisible God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and the representation of his substance: The greatness of his position and work in relation to God and man, the mediator, the only mediator of God and of men, having the nature of both, and in this nature teaching and working, suffering and dying, all in order to accomplish his Father's will, to bring man back to the friendship and likeness of his Maker: The greatness of the salvation designed and accomplished, in the deliverance of sinners from sin, from the wrath of God and everlasting death; and in their restoration to God, their elevation to godliness and everlasting glory. Contemplating the true greatness and unspeakable glory of the person and work and salvation of Christ, we cannot but see how great the love of God, how unspeakably great the gift of his love. Those only who know how great is the Son of God, and how great the plan of mercy, and how great the glory yet to be revealed in the souls redeemed to God through his blood, can know and tell how great the gift, how great the love.

2d, The bestowment of the gift. In other words, how the Son of God has been given by his Father.

There are at least two ways of giving. One is to put the gift into the hands of one person so as to

make it singly his own. Another is to bring it within the reach of more than one, so as to convey a benefit common to all, and enjoyable by each individual at his pleasure. This latter is clearly what is intended in the giving of Christ. The Lord Jesus is given by his Father to men, as a source of blessings to the race, free to all, but enjoyed and enjoyable only as received. As God gives mankind food to eat, water to drink, and raiment to put on; the sun to shine by day and the moon and stars by night; rain from the sky and fruitful seasons to fill our hearts with food and gladness,—so has he given Christ. As he has given the sun in the sky to be a light to the world of matter, so has he given Jesus the Sun of righteousness to be a light to the world of mind. As he has given corn to grow and to die in order to nourish and cherish our bodily life, so has he given Christ the bread of life, the bread which cometh down from heaven, to live and to die in order to restore and nourish our spiritual life. In short, God in giving his only-begotten and well-beloved Son, has not given him to one individual and not to another, but has sent him into the world as he has given and sent his written word into the world, to be a blessing common to the race, and therefore to do and to endure all that was necessary in order to bring man back to God and up to glory. The gift of the written word is the best illustration we know of the gift of the Word made flesh. The Son of God is the gift of his Father in the same manner as the Scriptures.

3d, The extent of the gift. In other words, to whom has God given his only-begotten Son?

This interesting question, which deeply concerns all, is to be considered according to the interpretation of the word *world*. It is clear that the gift is the manifestation of the love. It is clear that the love embraces the world. And it is clear that the world is the race of man. As, therefore, the love of God embraces the race, and the gift of his Son is the manifestation of his love, it follows that Christ is the gift of his Father to mankind. Without the smallest hesitation or mental reserve, we are therefore warranted to declare, that as much as the sun in the sky, and the Bible in our hands are the gifts of God to Asia and Africa, to Europe and America, so is the Son of his love. In the same manner, accordingly, every gospel hearer is warranted to hold, that as God has given his word and his Son to the world, and that as I am one of the world, therefore he has given his word and his Son to me. It is our joy and our duty to preach to you, and to every man, woman, and child we may meet, that God has so loved you as to give his only-begotten Son to you. And it is yours to believe, and to rejoice and boast in the great and glorious truth. If, therefore, any of you do not have Christ, it is not because God has not given him, for that he did eighteen hundred years ago; it is because you have not taken him. When God gives and man refuses, the blessing is not and cannot be enjoyed. As Christ is God's gift to the race of man, all are welcome.

III. The design of God's gift of his Son to the world.

In this one design there are two great truths to be observed—namely, the means and the end; the faith required in order to salvation enjoyed; faith in the Son of God in order to benefit from the love and the gift of God. Those, therefore, who thank God for his love and his gift, and for the great blessing thereby brought within the reach of mankind, must not forget the necessity of faith in Christ, in other words, the reception of the gift, in order to enjoy the blessing. We have therefore before us two great themes,—faith and salvation, faith in the Son of God, and salvation by faith in him.

1. Faith in the Son of God in order to salvation.

Let us keep our eye upon the words "*every one who believeth in him.*" In meditating on them we are led to notice what it is to believe on the Son of God, the simplicity and necessity of the demand, and the freeness of the gospel as seen in the word, *every one, whosoever.*

1st, What it is to believe on the Son of God.

To believe, is to receive a word as true, whatever the word may be. To believe the Son of God, is to be sure of the truth of what he said. To believe *in, on,* or *upon* the Son of God, is to be sure of the truth of his name and mission, and to trust to him in order to salvation. It is to receive him as the Son of God and

the Saviour of the world, and our Saviour. It is to lippen to him, to lean upon him, to trust ourselves in his hands, assured that in him we are safe to all eternity. It is to receive him into our hearts and minds in every capacity in which his Father presents him to the view of men. It is to receive him as our mediator, the only mediator of God and of men. It is to welcome him as our profet, priest, and king. As our profet or teacher, we welcome him, when, having no mind of our own, we as little children hail with joy every word which drops from his lips. As our priest and sacrifice, we welcome him, when we trust to his death for our life, to his resurrection in order to our justification, and to his intercession in order to our continual acceptance with God. As our king, we welcome him, hailing him as our ruler, law-giver, and judge, when, having no will of our own, we obey all his commands, walk in all his ways, and follow him whithersoever he goeth. Such is believing in Jesus; such is a life of faith in the Son of God.

2d, The simplicity and necessity of the requirement of faith in Christ in order to salvation.

The necessity of faith is seen in this, that believing in the Son of God is the way, and the only way, of receiving the gift of God. Temporal gifts are received in the body, spiritual gifts in the mind; temporal blessings with the hand, spiritual blessings with the heart. As bread, the gift of God to the world, is received by eating, so Christ the living bread is received by believing. As bread can do the body no

good unless we eat it, so Christ can do the soul no good unless we believe in him. The reason is plain; as the bread must go through the frame in order to nourishment and strength, so Christ must enter and pervade and fill the mind. While therefore God in his love gives Christ, and with him, and in him, salvation; man, in faith, must take Christ in order to the salvation which is in him. Thus while God's mercy comes down in Christ, and meets man's misery; man's faith must rise up to Christ, and meet God's mercy.

3d, The freeness of the gospel as seen in the word, *whosoever*, or *every one*.

We have already seen the world-wide love and gift of God in the word *world;* we now see the individual and impartial freeness of the blessing in the word *whosoever*. The Greek word πας is more literally *every one*. Whichever rendering is preferred, the idea is one and the same, namely, that any one, every one of the race of man, is welcome to salvation. Only believe in the Son of God. Whosoever believeth, any one, every one who believeth. Could words be plainer? Could a statement be clearer? Could an offer be freer? Could a proclamation be less mistakeable? Who, with these words before him, can fetter the gospel, can stint the grace, can limit the love and the gift of God? Who, with these words before him, can have the smallest doubt that there is salvation for him, and that he is as welcome as any one of the children of men? Is not the word *whosoever believeth?* Every one, every Asian, every European, every African, every

American. Every one, every man, every woman, every child. Every one, whosoever of all classes, all characters, rich or poor, virtuous or vicious. As God loved the world, let none say, God may not have loved me. As Christ is the gift of God to the loved world, let none say, Christ may not be God's gift to me. As the men or women in the world are singled out by the glorious word *whosoever*, *every one* who believeth, let none say, Salvation may not be for me. As it is free to every one, it is sure to all who believe in Jesus. In short, dear friends, whoever you are, whatever you have been, here is Christ, here is salvation, here is everlasting life for you. Only believe, and all is yours.

2. The salvation made sure, the eternal life enjoyed by every one who believes in Jesus.

Let us now keep our eye upon the words, "*He shall not perish, but have everlasting life.*" Here it will be observed, the blessing is double; deliverance from the necessary, the dreadful doom of sin, and elevation to the enjoyment of the unspeakable gift, eternal life. Let us meditate on these two things.

1st, Deliverance from perishing is ensured to every one who believes in Jesus.

Mark the glorious words, "every one who believeth on him shall not perish." And what is it to perish? We entreat every one to examine, that they may see how dreadful is the doom of sin, how desirable the deliverance of Christ, how important the demand of faith, how gracious and how glorious the design of God.

The word *απολλυμαι*, here rendered to *perish*, denotes, to be destroyed. Thus a thing may perish, being destroyed in fire or water, or by any other element of wasting, or means of death. To perish or to be destroyed is for the materials of which any body is composed to be loosened down and separated from one another, so that the body, as such, ceases to be. Thus a ship perishes at sea, a house by fire, a living body by death. While the body perishes in the grave, it will rise again. The perishing from which the gospel saves is the destruction of soul and body in hell fire. Of this our Saviour says, "Be not afraid of them who kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but rather fear him who is able to destroy"—that is, to make to perish—"both soul and body in hell." The perishing of the body in the grave is the first death, from which there is deliverance in the resurrection. The perishing of soul and body in hell fire is the second death, from which there is no resurrection, because it is called "everlasting punishment," "everlasting destruction." This takes place in the judgment of the last day, "when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire, taking vengeance on those who know not God, and who obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." And mark how the vengeance is perishing, and how the perishing is described. "They shall be punished with destruction, everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." From our Saviour himself, and other scriptures, we

learn that this destruction will be by fire. In the judgment, "the King will say to those on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which is prepared for the devil and his angels." And we read when this awful sentence is enforced, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." And again, "The fearful, and unbelieving, and idolaters, and all liars, have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Such is the Scripture view of perishing. Such is the destruction of the ungodly. Such is the fearful doom awaiting all who live and die without Christ. Who does not see the doom to be dreadful? Who does not hail with thankfulness and joy the glorious gospel which brings deliverance from such a doom? Who will turn a deaf ear to the call of mercy which assures us "that every one who believeth on the Son of God shall not perish?"

2d, Everlasting life is ensured to every one who believes in Jesus.

And what is everlasting life? Here are two enquiries,—the life, and its duration.

(1.) Life is a mysterious and dignified property which God has bestowed upon millions of his creatures, by which they are capable of feeling, action, and enjoyment. It is much more than mere existence, which is common to all beings. Of life there are different kinds, particularly animal and spiritual. Animal life is common to all men with the lower creatures. Spiritual life is the life of justification and of regenera-

tion; life by the application of the blood of Christ, when the sinner is delivered from condemnation; life by the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ, when the soul, now dead to sin, becomes alive to God: and all through Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the life, the new life which is hid with Christ in God. This is the life of God in the soul of man. In short, it is a life in God, a life to God, and a life like God. Animal life we have in the first birth, the birth of flesh; spiritual life in the second birth, the birth of spirit. The first life we derive from Adam, who was made a living soul. The second and higher life from the second Adam, who was made a life-giving spirit. Thus we acquire a knowledge of everlasting life.

(2.) As life is much more than mere existence, so is everlasting life. As the life of man here involves a capacity of feeling, action, and enjoyment proportioned to the powers of his mind and the state of his heart, so will everlasting life in a much higher degree. As spiritual life here is a life so high and so holy as to be with God, in God, to God, and like God; much higher and holier will everlasting life be. As spiritual life is the friendship and likeness of God, sympathy with God, a delight in God, and the indwelling and inworking of God's own Spirit; everlasting life is the endless duration and working of this high and holy condition. In short, eternal life is the endless perpetuation of all that is noble in man as man, and of all that is Godlike in him as a new creature. It is the endless enjoyment of all that is intellectual as be-

longing to the life of the first birth, and of all that is pure and spiritual as belonging to the new life of the second birth. It is the eternal enjoyment of the life of God in the soul, of the favour and friendship of God in Christ. It is an eternity spent in the fellowship of holy, redeemed and angelic beings, and of the Son of God himself. "For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and lead them unto fountains of living waters; and God himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes."

Such is a feeble glimpse of the life, the everlasting life which the gospel brings to men, and which is the possession of every one who believes in Jesus. And such was God's design in so loving the world as to give his Son, his only-begotten, his well-beloved Son. And such is the accomplishment of his design in every soul which believes and obeys. Who, then, will refuse? Who will be so foolish as to neglect this great salvation? Why will you die? Choose life that you may live. God engages to give you life for ever if you take Christ. Take God at his word; trust his love; rely upon his promise; believe on the Lord Jesus, and you cannot perish. Come to Christ and abide in him, and everlasting life is yours.

IV. The evidence of God's design to save all who believe in his Son.

The evidence is Christ's mission and its object, in which we see perfect harmony with the love and the gift and the design of God. On this part of the

gospel enlargement is unnecessary. A few remarks are enough.

Here we see that, as Christ was the gift of his Father's love, the design of his coming into the world could not be vengeance, but mercy; it could not be destruction, but salvation. He was sent, therefore, not to judge, but to save.

Because of sin, judgment, even to condemnation and destruction, was what the world—that is, the race—deserved. But this was not the purpose of God, otherwise the whole race must have perished. Salvation from sin, from wrath and ruin, was God's loving desire and design; and, accordingly, to accomplish this design, his Son was given in love, and sent in mercy. Accordingly, he came not as a judge, but as a Saviour. Hence, we find him all along keeping this in view, and refusing to judge or condemn in any case which was brought before him, John viii. 10, 11, xii. 44–50.

Such is the evidence, and such the assurance which the Lord Jesus, in these glorious words, gives of the love of the Father to mankind, and of the safety and eternal life of all who believe in him. Who, with this assurance, can doubt the good news of this first line of the Gospel roll? Who, with this evidence, can doubt the love of God, the gift of this love, and the design of the gift? Who, after calmly and anxiously surveying the whole, can doubt his own welcome to everlasting life in Christ? Let every one mark and remark this, that nothing shuts up to perishing, and nothing shuts out from everlasting

life, but ignorance of the love, and neglect of the gift, of God in Christ. With Christ you cannot sink into woe. Without Christ you cannot rise to glory. With Christ you cannot die for ever. Without Christ you cannot live for ever. Believe, then, in him, and the life of God in him is yours, and yours for ever.

CONCLUSION.

1. As the love of God to mankind is the grand theme of this first proclamation of the Godspell, let all consider the due influence it should have on the mind. As love begets love, and gifts gratitude, let the love of God to you be met with your love to him; and let his gifts, but above all, his unspeakable gift, be met with unspeakable gratitude. Let every one from the heart say, "We love him because he first loved us;" and "Thanks to God for his unspeakable gift."

2. As the love of God desires the life of the world, and designs and ensures the life of every one who believes in Jesus, let none who hears of this love rush into death; let none who hates death sleep on in his sins, neglecting Christ, the only way to everlasting life. If God wished us to die, we could not help it; but when he wishes us to live, and live for ever, and when he has provided everlasting life at such a cost, who will be so foolish for himself, who will be so cruel to his own soul, as to despise or neglect the great salvation? As God said to Israel, much more does he say to you, "See I have set before you this day life and good,

and death and evil, and blessing and cursing; therefore choose life that you may live."

3. To those who glory in the love of God and believe in his Son, we would say—As God has loved the world, and shown his love in the gift of his Son, see to it, beloved brethren, that you drink into the same spirit of love. Let all who love God for his love, imitate that love, in love to the souls of perishing men; and show their love by their prayers and their givings, by their efforts and sacrifices, in order to the salvation of souls and the advancement of the kingdom of God in the world. Seeing that God has so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

4. Lastly, Seeing that God has so loved man as to give his Son, let every man so love himself as to take him. Forget not the dread alternative of a refusal. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him."

CHAPTER VI.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST'S COMING TO SAVE SINNERS.

"This is a faithful word, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."—1 Tim. i. 15.

Having seen that the first truth of the Gospel roll is the love of God in giving his Son, we now consider the second, namely, the coming of the Son in accordance with his Father's will. In the Gospel, as in all things, the Father and the Son are one, one in mind and heart and will. Hence, when the fulness of time arrived, the voice was heard, "Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will." Hence this is a faithful word, not only that God so loved the world that he gave his Son, but also that the Son so loved the Father as willingly to yield himself to his will, and become his gift to man; and that, like his Father, he so loved the race of man, that he came into the world to do and to endure whatever was necessary to save the race from sin and ruin.

The hallowed tide of influence which this short scripture has caused to roll over thousands of minds, eternity alone can fully disclose. Many a forlorn

and hopeless wanderer has it inspired with the good hope and assured faith of eternal salvation in Christ. The writer himself can never forget the hour when, after years of interchanging sunshine and clouds, it brought a peace and a joy to his soul which he has never lost from that hour till now, and which he hopes to have through all eternity.

In the good news here stated, two things mainly are to be observed: the facts of the word spoken, and the claims of this word to the regard of all. In other words, the coming of Christ into the world, and the truth and acceptableness of the announcement.

I. THE COMING OF CHRIST INTO THE WORLD.

"Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners."

Here are four wonderful and glorious truths, answering to the inquiries, Who came? whither did he come? for what? and for whom?

1. Who came? Jesus Christ.

Here is good news indeed, that God having sent his Son, his Son came. He came, the first promise of whose coming was made to man more than five thousand years, and the last more than four hundred years before the glorious event. He came, the long looked for Saviour of the race, the seed of the woman who was to bruise the serpent's head; the seed of Abraham, in whom all nations were to be blessed; the root and the offspring of David, the Messiah appointed and anointed by Jehovah, the hope of Israel and the desire of all nations. He came, the well beloved and

only begotten of Jehovah, having dwelt in the bosom of the Father, and had glory with him before the world was. He came who, although in the form of God, emptied himself and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men. He came who was the brightness of his Father's glory, and the representation of his person, the image of the invisible God, and the first-born of all creation. This is he whose name is Christ Jesus, the anointed One, the Saviour. The coming of one so great and glorious in the form of a man was an event more wonderful than tongue can describe or imagination grasp. Yet such is the good news proclaimed in our hearing. "Christ Jesus came."

2. Whither did he come? Into the world.

1st. In this we see great honour put upon our globe and our race. As the centurion did not think himself worthy that Jesus Christ should come under his roof, so we were not worthy that he should come into our world. Yet he came. He came, not as angels or as men. Not as angels, who were visitors to earth, but not dwellers among men, and who appeared in the form of men while belonging to another race. Not as men, who were never anywhere else. He came from heaven, it may be from some other globe in creation, where he had dwelt in his Father's bosom. He came into the world, a member of the human family, a partaker of the same nature with ourselves, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. Yet, though a man, he was not begotten like other men. Though born of a

woman, God only, and not man, was his father. Hence he was called the Son of God, Luke i. 34, 35. That this earth was not his first abode, and therefore that man could not be his father, appears also from his own words, "No one hath gone up into heaven, but he who came down from heaven, the Son of man who was in heaven," John iii. 13. By this we understand that none who was now on earth had been in heaven but himself. The other inhabitants of the world were of the earth earthy, like the first man; but he, the second man, the head of a new race, was the Lord from heaven, 1 Cor. xv. 47.

2d. The necessity of his coming into the same globe which was the abode of the fallen race is abundantly manifest. How otherwise could he have accomplished his undertaking? His becoming a man was needful to the salvation of man, and his coming into the world was needful to his becoming a man. The relative distance of bodies in order to certain results is a universal law of the material world. The same law holds in the world of mind. As the sun in the sky must be at a due distance in order to answer the ends designed, so must the Sun of righteousness. This we take to be the meaning of those beautiful words, "That was the true light which, coming into the world, lighteth every man," John i. 9. That is, being in the world, the rays of his divine teaching and burning love were brought within the reach of the race. How otherwise than by coming into the world could he have the nature of man, and do and teach and suffer and die, so as to

satisfy justice for mankind; and let men see and hear, believe and obey, so as to forsake sin and come back to their Maker?

3. For what he came. To save.

1st. The design of Christ's coming into the world is the joy. Apart from this design, the mere fact is not good news. Had he come with the thunderbolts of wrath, as he will one day do, to judge and to destroy, the news had not been good. But he came to save. The contrast between what was, and what might have been the object of his mission, Jesus himself sometimes states. He taught that salvation and not judgment was his Father's design in sending him. "For God sent not his Son into the world that he might judge the world, but that the world through him might be saved." And so, being his Father's servant, and of one mind with him, he says, "I came not to judge the world, but to save the world." And when asked if he would not burn up a village which would not receive him, he nobly said, "The Son of man came not to destroy the lives of men, but to save." In harmony with the design of his mission was the spirit which he ever breathed, the words he spoke, the wonders he wrought, and the ways he took. Again and again he had occasion for wrath and vengeance, and sometimes he showed what he could do, and what he might have done; but meekness and not violence, mercy and not vengeance, marked his every step. In all things he honoured his name Jesus. Never forgetting that he came to save, he showed by his teaching and his

miracles, his spirit and his deportment, that he was indeed a Saviour, a deliverer, a physician come to heal the sick, a redeemer to ransom the captives, the Saviour of the world.

2d. Regarding the salvation of Christ, two things are here to be observed—its nature and its accomplishment: in other words, what he came to save from, and what he did to save.

(1.) What Christ came to save from.

Unless Christ's salvation is understood, it will not be prized. It is when men see the evil of sin that they see the need of salvation from it. Salvation denoting deliverance, always implies danger. The danger of the sinner being *in* sin, deliverance *from* sin is essential to deliverance from the danger. And such is the salvation of Christ. His name was called Jesus to teach us not only that he was to be a Saviour, but a Saviour from sin. Christ came to save from the condemnation of sin, from the pollution of sin, from the power of sin, from the love and practice of sin, from the punishment of sin, and accordingly from the wrath of God and everlasting fire. He came therefore to open up the way to the pardon of sin, the friendship of God, the indwelling of the holy Spirit, meetness for heaven, and the enjoyment of everlasting life. Who that gets to know and understand these things can fail to prize the salvation of the Lord Jesus Christ?

(2.) What Christ did to save.

It is a great matter to bear in mind that whatever Christ came to do he did. How then, did he save

when he came? He saved by his life and his teaching, by his miracles and sufferings, and, above all, by his death, in which he gave himself up a sacrifice for sin. He saved, inasmuch as he took every legal and righteous barrier out of the way of our salvation, so as to render it possible for God to save. He saved, inasmuch as he endured whatever was the demand of the justice, in order to the forth-flowing of the mercy, of God. He saved, inasmuch as he opened a fountain for sin and uncleanness, and weaved a garment of salvation, a robe of righteousness, and all to cleanse and to cover the guilty. He came to save, becoming himself the door of salvation, through which, if any one enter in, he is saved; becoming the way to the Father, and the foundation of all our hopes of everlasting life. As sin is the undoing of man, he came to be the undoing of sin. As sin is our folly, he came to be our wisdom. As sin is our guilt, he came to be our righteousness. As sin is our pollution, he came to be our sanctification. As sin is our ruin, he came to be our redemption. Thus he came to save, and thus he saves. "Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men, in which we must be saved."

4. Whom did he come to save? Sinners.

1st. Having seen that it is good news that Jesus Christ came into the world, and that he came to save, —the inquiry next arises, For whom is this salvation provided? The great concern of the anxious, awakened mind, is, Did Jesus Christ come to save me?

It is our joy to know that in this portion of the Gospel roll we have a clear, an almost unmistakable answer to this question. The child of Adam who owns to the name *sinner* may here see that there is salvation for him. A sinner is a transgressor of the law, a rebel against God in thought, word, and deed. This is your character; sinner therefore is your name. You have broken the law, which is holy, just, and good; you have rebelled against a holy and righteous God; Jesus Christ therefore came to save you. Had you not sinned, you had not needed salvation; but being a sinner, here is a Saviour for you. He came to save sinners from their past sins in the obtainment of pardon, and from sin in all time to come by implanting love to holy things. Is there any sinner whom God does not wish to cease from sin? All must answer, No. Is there any sinner then whose past sins God is not willing to forgive? The forgiveness of sin and ceasing from sin must ever coincide. There is no sinner on earth then whom God is not willing to save. And what is Christ's coming to save but God's way of saving sinners? As the name of every man is in the word *world*, that is, the race, so the name of every man is in the word *sinner*, that is, the character of the race. Let no one therefore doubt whether or not Jesus Christ came to save him. As your name is sinner, your name is here. Jesus Christ therefore came to save you, to open the door of salvation for you. You may be a little sinner or a great sinner, a young sinner or an old sinner; you may be a drunkard or a swearer, a liar or a thief; like Paul, you may

be a ringleader of sinners, first and foremost in all kinds of sin; still Jesus Christ came to save sinners, and therefore to save you. The greatness of your sins can be no hindrance to your salvation. Another word says, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

2d. From all this it follows that what is wanting to the salvation of sinners is faith, believing in him who came to save. As Jesus Christ could not be a Saviour without coming to save, no more can you have salvation without coming to be saved. As he said, "Lo, I come," it is for sinners to say the same. As he came to lay down his life for you, come to him and you receive life from him. Come to Jesus, believe in him, trust to him, lean upon him, abide in him, and you are saved. Come to him, for he bids you come, and promises you rest and salvation. Come to him, for he bids you welcome, and pledges his word not to turn you away. "Him who cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out."

II. The claims of this word to the reception and confidence of all.

The glorious truth that there is salvation for man, and that this salvation is in Jesus, and that sinners of the highest and lowest degree are all alike welcome, has claims to the attention and confidence of men beyond every other.

The great truth before us is here presented as

having two powerful claims upon all men, namely, its faithfulness and worthiness of all acceptation—that is, it is a word which is true, and therefore to be believed with assurance; and its value and importance are so great that none should neglect it, or be careless about it, but that every man on earth should give it a hearty welcome.

1. This is a faithful word—

1st. Mark what the faithful word is. That Jesus Christ came into the world. This all gospel hearers believe. That he came to save, to save from sin and everlasting death. That he came to save sinners, rebels against God. This is the faithful word, the word of truth, the word of the truth of the gospel. Can you say that you believe this word, every part of it, the last as much as the first? The word that Jesus came to save sinners is as faithful as the word that he came into the world; and as you are a sinner it must be as faithful, and therefore as much to be believed that he came to save you. What is faithful we are bound to believe; what is true we are bound to trust.

2d. The faithfulness of this word we will endeavour to establish.

It is the word of God who cannot lie; and as God is faithful and true, so must his word be. But to remove all doubt, its faithfulness is established by God himself upon evidence of the most extraordinary and overwhelming kind. We have the fourfold evidence of prediction, miracles, eye-witnesses, and universal Christian experience.

(1.) The predictions foretelling that the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, would come, exactly tally with the leading events in the life of Jesus; and some of them foretell the deliverance of mankind and the salvation of sinners as the fruit of his coming. "To him give all the profets witness." And what do they witness? Not merely that he would come, but also "that through his name every one who believeth on him would receive forgiveness of sins," Acts x. 43.

(2.) The wonders and signs which the Father wrought both for him, and through him, and above all his resurrection from the dead, prove that Jesus was the Messiah, and that he came to save. His resurrection both determined him to be the Son of God with power, and declared the satisfaction of justice with his propitiation for sinners. John xiv. 10, 11; Rom. i. 4, iv. 25.

(3.) The eye-witnesses of Jesus, vouching both for his Messiahship and the certainty of salvation through his work, are numerous and unexceptionable. There is a great cloud of witnesses, from Simeon in the temple, who took Jesus when a babe into his arms, to John in the isle of Patmos, who had leaned on his bosom at supper, and afterwards saw his glory in heavenly vision. Hear the witness of Simeon to this faithful word: "Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; a light to enlighten the nations, and the glory of thy people Israel." Hear the witness of Peter to the faithfulness of this word: "We have not followed

cunningly devised fables when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but were eye-witnesses of his majesty." Hear the witness of the beloved disciple, John: "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us; and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." And again, "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled concerning the Word of life. For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and witness, and show to you that eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us." But was the life manifested to save sinners? Yes, says the same John. "And we have seen and witness that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour." Of whom? of sinners? Yes. "Of the world." Here is abundant and glorious witness to the truth of the word, that Jesus Christ came, that he came into the world, that he came to save, to save sinners, and therefore you.

(4.) The millions of souls which have been saved by God through the coming of Jesus Christ into the world—thousands of whom are already in glory, and thousands still on the way—all combine with one heart and one voice to witness to the faithfulness of this word. Is it true that Jesus Christ came to save sinners? Yes. And how is this established? Not merely by what he did to save, but also by the fact that millions have been saved by him, yea, of all who

have come to him not one has ever been refused. Paul shall answer for the whole of this great multitude which no man can number: "I am the chief of sinners, who was before a blasfemer, and persecutor, and injurious. But I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant with faith and the love which is in Christ Jesus. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy that in me the chief, Jesus Christ might show forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to those who shall believe on him unto everlasting life." If Paul could rest upon the faithfulness of this word, may not you? If millions have found it true, not only as a historical fact, but also as a personally experimental, joyful truth, why should any one doubt another hour? O sinner, try the truth of this word, and be assured that you will be saved as well as others. Then you will be able to join with the millions of saved souls in witnessing not only that Jesus came to save sinners, but also that he lives to save, and that he is able and willing to save to the uttermost all who come to God through him.

2. This word is worthy of all acceptation.

The right gradation of ideas is observable here. There is many a word faithful which is not worthy of attention. It may be unimportant, or it may not in any way affect our interests. Accordingly we may receive it or not, as we please. Very different is it with the word which is both true and personally important. We need be at no loss to determine which

of these is the case of the word before us. Those who know not its value are here assured that it is not only true, and therefore to be trusted, but also worthy of all acceptation, and therefore to be neglected by none, but welcomed and embraced by all. This we shall endeavour to establish by showing that upon this word hangs the present and everlasting happiness of men. Notice these two positions—that it claims the welcome of the heart, and the welcome of all hearts.

1st. It is worthy of acceptation. It has strong claims to be received with the whole heart and soul, strength and mind. Observe the word which has this claim, "Jesus Christ came." Think who he is. He came into the world. Think of its rebellion. He came to save. Who that needs salvation will not hail with joy and gratitude the good news? He came to save sinners. What sinner may despair or doubt? Who will refuse, who can neglect this great salvation?

(1.) Salvation must be worthy of the acceptation of those who are in danger or distress. If so in any circumstances, much more the word which brings deliverance from the greatest of all dangers and distresses—from sin and the wrath of God and everlasting fire. Who that is in danger of fire would refuse deliverance? Much more from the everlasting woe of the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.

(2.) The salvation of the soul must be worthy of acceptation. To each man there can be nothing so precious as himself, for if the man is lost, all is lost.

Hence the value of life. And if life is thus valuable to each individual for a few years, much more for ever. The value of the soul, so strikingly taught by the Lord Jesus, is clearly the dictate of reason, and must be manifest to every mind as soon as stated. But in sin the life is forfeited, the soul is lost; unless therefore the soul be delivered from sin, its destruction is sure. Who then, knowing and believing, and thinking on these things, will not hail with joy and thankfulness the salvation of Jesus? If the salvation of the body from fire or from water, from death by accident or by crime—if this is worthy of acceptation,—so much so that all men would wonder at a refusal,—how much more the salvation of the soul from everlasting death.

(3.) The doom of those who die unsaved, either through ignorance or neglect of this faithful word, renders it worthy of acceptation. If you, dear friends, are content with this dreadful doom,—if you are willing to dwell in devouring fire, and to lie down in everlasting burnings,—then, but not till then, deem this faithful word unworthy of your acceptation.

(4.) The present blessings and eternal glories of all who receive and rely upon this faithful word render it truly worthy of acceptation. Who will refuse a free and full pardon, peace with God, election out of the world, and adoption into the family of God, and the heirship of a throne and a crown, a kingdom and a mansion in the presence of God and the Lamb for ever and ever? These gifts are wrapt up in this

faithful word; and are they to be refused or neglected? Are the blessings of pardon and peace from men, crowns and kingdoms on earth, worthy of acceptation, and not a million times more these blessings from God—blessings in everlasting glory?

(5.) The fact that this faithful word proclaims a salvation provided by God himself, and wrought by his Son Jesus Christ, and at such a cost, renders it truly worthy of acceptation. What God says and does must be worthy of attention and reverential awe. What God gives must be worthy of man's getting. If it was worthy of God to give, and of Christ to come in order to accomplish salvation, surely it must be worthy of man to receive. That which it was worthy of God and of his Son to provide, surely it must be unworthy of men to refuse. Then think of the cost,—the humiliation, sufferings and death of Christ,—and say, was it worthy of him to endure all this in order to save, and can it be worthy of you to neglect and be lost? If his sufferings were so great in finishing salvation, and if his glory is so great in reward of what he has done, how great must be the sufferings of those who die unsaved, and how bright the glory of those who accept of this faithful word, this great salvation.

2d. It is worthy of all acceptation. That is, of a universal welcome.

(1.) If worthy of being received by one, it must be worthy of being received by all. There is none so low who is not welcome, and whom, if received, it will not raise. And there is none so high who can afford to

neglect it, or who will not sink into the lowest hell, should he deem it unworthy of his attention.

(2.) It is worthy of all acceptation because provided for all, and all are welcome. God our Saviour wishes all to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth, 1 Tim. ii. 4. Some people speak as if the great want to men's salvation was the will of God. The truth is that if all who hear the gospel were as willing to be saved as God is to save them, we believe not one gospel-hearer would perish.

(3.) If there is one who thinks this word not faithful, or, although faithful, not worth his attention, frankly say so, and produce your strong reasons. But if this is not your thought, then be consistent, and give heed to the good news, and show your conviction of its worthiness by your instant and hearty reception of the Lord Jesus and his great salvation.

(4.) Never forget that you must accept of this faithful word, or die. To those who accept, life, everlasting life is sure. To those who neglect there is no escape from death and destruction. If Christ had not come to save, there had been no salvation for any. If you do not come to be saved, salvation cannot be yours. Come to him now, and you are saved now. Abide in him for ever, and everlasting salvation is yours.

(5.) To believers we would say, As Christ came into the world to save, let this be your work while on earth by all means to save some. This is one mark of the true Church and the true Christian.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF THE DEATH AND RESURRECTION OF CHRIST FOR THE SINS, AND IN ORDER TO THE SALVATION, OF MEN.

"Brethren, I make known to you the gospel which I preached to you. . . . . For I delivered to you among the first things that which also I received. How that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures."—1 Cor. xv. 1–4.

Having seen that the second great fact of the gospel is the coming of Christ into the world to save sinners, we now consider the third,—namely, the death and resurrection of Christ in order to the justification and everlasting life of the children of men. In the scripture before us, this is very clearly set forth; and more plainly than in the other scriptures in the roll is this called the gospel. This, Paul says, is the good news which he had preached to the Corinthians, and which they had received, believing the message which he had brought. In it also they stood, it being the foundation of their hope towards God. And through its means they were saved, their sins being forgiven and washed away through Christ. Their salvation of course

depended upon their holding by what he calls, τινι λογω, "some word" which he had preached to them—some saying or doctrine. This word we take to be the great facts here presented as the substance of the gospel. Unless, he adds, they had believed in vain; that is, their faith would be fruitless if it was not an abiding, persevering faith, which they retained till the end.

He then goes on to rehearse the word,—the gospel, which he had handed over to them, and which he speaks of as being, εν πρωτοις, "among the first" or chief things which he had preached, and that which he also had received. Whether the word *first* refers to order of time, or order of importance, it must hold equally in either case that the good news here preached to the Corinthians were proclaimed to them while in their sins, and therefore before they believed.

The great facts here named as a summary of the gospel are three,—namely, the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. These good news which Paul preached among the first things to the Corinthians, he doubtless preached wherever he went. And the same good news God has commanded to be proclaimed through all the world to every creature. It is our joy therefore, as it is our duty, to preach them to you, and to all we meet, for all are welcome to the blessing.

The three facts naturally divide our meditations into three parts.

I. THE DEATH OF CHRIST FOR THE SINS OF MEN, ACCORDING TO THE PREDICTIONS WHICH WENT BEFORE.

Here four things are presented to view; Christ's death, death for sin, death for our sins, and the harmony of this event with the predictions of the Old Testament.

1. Christ's death is good news.

1st. The birth and life of Christ are truly good news, because of the wonders by which they were distinguished; but mainly because they were steps necessary to his death. In his birth, his Father prepared for him a body which in due time he might yield up as a sacrifice for sin. And his life was the holy path of power and love, patience and obedience, which he trod in preparation for the cross. But the crowning event, without which all the rest would have been unavailing to the salvation of souls, was his death.

2d. Death itself is no good news, because of loss and pain and shame; but still more the death of the holy and the good. Yet strange to say, the death of Christ the only begotten Son of God, the holy and the righteous One, is glad tidings of great joy.

3d. As regards the conduct of the men into whose hands Christ was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, his death is one of the darkest deeds ever done by man, and one of the foulest blots on the page of history. Yet, such is the wonderful way in which the Allmighty often works by con-

traries in the accomplishment of his eternal purposes, that this same dark deed of man's malice is to us the brightest display of God's love. Man did it in blindness and wickedness, but God had foreordained it in wisdom and love, and was bringing it about in faithfulness and mercy. Hence Christ's own glorious, meek, and majestic words: "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. None taketh it from me, but I lay it down from myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again. This commandment have I received from my Father." Hence also, the words of Peter: "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and through means of lawless hands, ye have crucified and slain." Hence Christ's willing surrender of himself to suffering and death in the awful hour and power of darkness. He knew that in it all he was his Father's servant.

2. Christ's death is good news, because he died for sin.

1st. Death for sin denotes that death is the punishment inflicted or penalty endured on account of sin committed. Where the death is endured by the guilty, it intimates no deliverance; but where it is endured by the innocent, it intimates either a participation of the same blood, or substitution in room of the guilty. Of these three cases, the first is the position of the ungodly; the second, of infants; the third, of Christ.

2d. In a sense, therefore, the death of all men is for sin. All men die the first death for the sin of Adam.

And all the ungodly who die in sin, die the second death for their own sin. This arises from the fact that where sin is, death must be, both in individuals and in a race. Accordingly, as all men die for the sin of Adam, so Christ died for sin—for the sins of men. Christ had no sin, but "God made him who knew no sin, sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

3d. Christ's death for sin was a penalty paid to the law of God which man had broken; a satisfaction to the justice of God which, in the very nature of things, must inflict suffering even to death for transgression or disobedience. As where sin is, death must be, death was the penalty threatened to our first parents: "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." And the word is still the same to their offspring: "The soul that sinneth, it shall die." And all for this plain reason, that in the very nature of things, "The wages of sin is death." Accordingly, had no arrangement been made by which one might die for others, so as to stay both the cause and the perpetuity of death, the whole race of mankind must not only have died once, but died for ever. In the very nature of things, escape from everlasting death was impossible to man without the death of one in his stead, which should be an equivalent for the death of all. And here is the good news which the gospel brings—that in Christ,—the Son of God according to the Spirit, and the Son of man according to the flesh,—one has been found willing and fit to take the place of mankind, and to

suffer and die for their sins. In this capacity and with this design he died; and in his death an equivalent has been found, and ample compensation made for the sins of men. Accordingly, the good news is now proclaimed that justice is satisfied; that is, the justice of God says enough; enough has been done, enough endured, in order to the salvation of men. Jehovah is well pleased for the sake of his righteousness; the law is magnified and honoured; and now mercy is free to save the most guilty who will believe in the death of Christ for sin.

4th. Christ's death for sin is good news, because through it a way is opened up for the safe and honourable withdrawment of the penalty from the guilty. Christ the righteous having died for the sins of men, man the guilty need not now die for his own sin. All that remains on the part of the sinner is faith in the Saviour, a hearty welcome given to Christ who died for sin. What further adds to the glory of the good news, the moment that Christ is received into the heart, not only is past sin pardoned, but also a new creation is begun in which the further progress of sin, the cause of death, is stayed. Hence Christ becomes to us not only righteousness, but also sanctification. Thus the death of Christ for sin is good news to men.

3. Christ's death for sin is good news to us because he died for our sins.

1st. It is clear that the death of Christ can be good news to those only for whom he died. If therefore he

did not die for our sins, however much his death may be good news to many, it could be no good news to us. While, therefore, Paul says to the Corinthians, "Christ died for our sins," it behoves us to inquire whether this pronoun *our*, which stands for a name, stands for our name, as well as for the names of those to whom it is here applied. Only as it does so can it be good news to us.

2d. That Christ died for our sins, and for the sins of mankind in general, as well as for the sins of those to whom Paul is writing, we shall endeavour to show from these considerations.

(1.) The word *our* evidently takes in Paul and the members of the Corinthian church. That Christ died for the sins of both preacher and hearers is clearly the good news which Paul had preached when he came to Corinth. Nay, more, this was "among the first things" which he had delivered to them. And it was one of those things which he had received, evidently from the Lord Jesus himself, to preach, doubtless, wherever he went. Being preached to them before they believed, it must have been true of them while yet in their sins; it must have been true of them not as believers but as sinners, not as Christians but as men. Accordingly it must have been true of those who did not believe it as well as of those who did. For Paul preached it to them all alike, without knowing who would believe it, or who would not. The belief of some and the unbelief of others could not affect the truth of Paul's preaching. Rom. iii. 3.

(2.) The good news which Paul preached to the Corinthians being that which he had received, and therefore the same which Jesus has commanded to be preached to every creature, the same proclamation is alike true of every preacher and every hearer of the joyful sound. Every preacher is both warranted and charged to preach the same gospel which Paul preached. Some think that they are warranted only to preach that Christ died for sins; but not that he died for the sins of all who hear them, whoever they be. It is clear that Paul's gospel was wider than theirs, and that his good news went further. It is also clear that unless men believe that Christ died for their sins, the death of Christ is no good news to them. But what warrant has any one to believe it which we have not to preach it? Without doubt or drawback therefore, yea with joy and gladness, we preach to you and to all, that Christ's death is good news, not only because he died for sins, but also because he died for *your* sins.

(3.) All this is confirmed by other scriptures. In other gospel statements we read plainly that Christ died for all, that he gave himself a ransom for all. And that no one should mistake the words, "*our sins*," as if limited to those addressed, or to the class to which they belong, we find the apostle John guarding against any such limitation by carefully taking in the whole of mankind. "If any one sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And he is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but

also for those of the whole world," 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; 1 Tim. ii. 6; 1 John ii. 1, 2.

4. Christ's death for sin, yea, for our sins, is good news, because it is according to the Scriptures.

1st. The Scriptures here spoken of are the writings of Moses and the profets; the predictions and prefigurements of the Old Testament records. In these Scriptures not only the coming of the Messiah, but also his sufferings and death for sin, are all along presented to view.

(1.) Christ's death is according to the Scriptures. In the very first promise of mercy it was announced that the heel of the seed of the woman was to be bruised by the serpent, while he was to bruise the serpent's head. Implying that the death of the Saviour was to be the death of sin, and therefore the destruction of the works of the devil.

(2.) Christ's death for sin is according to the Scriptures. This great truth was proclaimed in the institution of sacrifices, and in many of the predictions and observances of the Old Testament Scriptures and Mosaic dispensation.

(3.) Christ's death for our sins is according to the Scriptures. All pointed to the death of the coming deliverer for the sins of men. Gen. iii. 15; Ps. xxii. 15–18; Isa. liii.; Dan. ix. 26.

2d. That these things were to be accomplished in the Messiah, and that they were accomplished in the Lord Jesus, he himself showed to his disciples after

his resurrection. Hence says Peter, "To him all the profets witness." See Luke xxiv. 25–27, 44–46.

3d. Christ's death for our sins being according to the Scriptures which reach over the period from Adam to Malachi, is a strong confirmation of the Christian faith. It assures us that it was an arrangement planned and purposed, foreknown and foreordained by God ages before. This event, therefore, which is good news to men, was part of a glorious plan for the recovery of the race. The gospel accordingly to which it belongs rests on a sure foundation. This part of God's everlasting plan being fulfilled, we may be assured, none else will fail. Those, therefore, who look for life to Christ's death cannot fail to rise to endless glory.

II. The burial of christ.

As Christ's burial cannot in itself be called good news, it seems at first view remarkable that the apostle should name it as one of the facts of the gospel. But the propriety of so doing appears when we consider its necessary place between the death and the resurrection.

Here two things may be observed.

1. Christ's burial accomplished great ends which could not have been gained by his immediate return to life.

1st. Three days in the grave proved, and were enough to prove, the truth of his death, while they may not have been enough to work corruption. Had he come

to life when taken down from the cross, many would have been disposed to question whether he had really died. And had he remained longer in the grave, the tabernacle might have begun to decay. But this God had decreed not to allow.

2d. In his burial, as well as in his death, Christ stooped to conquer. The very fact of his going down visibly into the grave, the domains of death, and allowing himself to be imprisoned for a while in the dark and lonely tomb, afforded him a more glorious victory by his resurrection than if he had only died and then come down alive from the cross. Had he not been buried he had not been raised from the grave. The humiliation of the former was a necessary step to the glory of the latter.

3d. Christ's burial for three days only was the sign given to the men of his generation. Hence when some asked a sign, he said, "An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and no sign shall be given to it but the sign of the profet Jonah. For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth." Of course the sign was not in the burial, but in the fact that he who was buried came to life again in so short a time. This was a sign that he was the messenger of God, and therefore that his preaching and claims were true.

2. Christ's burial, as well as his death, was according to the Scriptures.

Thus, it was foretold by Isaiah that while his foes

would have made a grave for him with the wicked, so as to have buried him along with the thieves who were crucified with him, God would not allow this, but would give him a tomb provided by a rich man. "His grave was made with the wicked, but with the rich was his tomb." And why? "Because he had done no violence, neither was guile found in his mouth." Isa. liii. 9, 10. See Lowth's version.

III. The resurrection of Christ according to the Scriptures.

As the death of Christ would be no good news without his resurrection, it is here stated as one of the great facts of the gospel lying at the foundation of God's plan of mercy, and therefore of man's hope of recovery.

Here six things are to be observed.

1. The resurrection of Christ is good news, because in many respects it is the most wonderful of all the miracles, and the most satisfactory of all the evidences of Christianity.

Our version reads, "He rose again"—but the Greek is passive, "he was raised," intimating more, namely, that it was by the power of God. Nothing ever done was more clearly the hand of God. Who but the Almighty could raise the dead?

2. Christ's resurrection is good news on his own account, as the vindication of his righteousness, truth, and innocence.

In his death men condemned him because he said

he was the Son of God. In his resurrection his Father justified him, declaring him to be his Son with power according to the spirit of holiness. In his death he was brought so low as to have an abode in hades, in which his soul was separated from his body; and in the grave he was made the prisoner of death. But in his resurrection we see his Father showing him the path of life, not leaving his soul in separation, nor allowing his flesh to see corruption. In his burial, his prison door was barred and sealed and watched by men. But in his resurrection, angels rolled the stone away and broke the seal, while Jesus burst the fetters and rose to life, for ever free from the hand of death and the prison of the grave. "Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more, death no more hath lordship over him," Rom. i. 4, vi. 9; 1 Tim. iii. 16; 1 Pet. iii. 18.

3. Christ's resurrection is good news on our account, because it is a pledge of the justification and acquittal of all who believe in him.

This precious truth is clearly taught by the apostle Paul in speaking of faith being reckoned unto righteousness "to those who believe upon him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was given up, on account of our trespasses, and was raised on account of our justification," Rom. iv. 24, 25. Intimating clearly that while Christ died for our sins, and so provided an atonement, he was also raised with a view to the acquittal from sin of all who should embrace the atonement provided.

Let us mark well the good news contained in this great gospel fact.

1st, While Christ's death was the finishing of his earthly work in the salvation of men, his resurrection was the proof that his work was done. On the cross his last words were, "It is finished," upon saying which he bowed his head and gave up the ghost. In his rising from the dead, God seals this word to be true. The descending angel, the quaking earth, the rending rocks, the rolling away of the stone, the bursting grave, the restoration of life to Jesus who died for our sins,—all these, what were they but heaven's loud echo reverberating from its eternal hills back to earth again the glorious words, "It is finished."

2d, While his death was the payment of the penalty of our sins, his resurrection from the dead was the discharge of justice, the acknowledgment of his Father that the ransom was paid. In this, God, as it were, signed his name, saying, All is paid. In raising him from the dead, he not only declared that he was his Son, but also that his Son had done enough and suffered enough in order to satisfy justice, to magnify and honour the law, and to insure the free and full discharge of every sinner who believes in his name. Hence Christ's resurrection is both his own justification, and the justification of all who flee to him and become one with him. As Christ who died for us was acquitted when he was raised from the dead, so those who believe in him are acquitted from their sins in the moment they believe. His vindication is ours. His

release is heaven's pledge of ours. Here is the power of his resurrection in our justification. Mark particularly Rom. viii. 33, 34.

4. Christ's resurrection is good news because it, as well as his death and burial, is according to the Scriptures.

1st, It was darkly shadowed forth in the early intimations of God's purposes of mercy to man. As in the first promise, the death of the seed of the woman is foreshadowed in the bruising of his heel by the serpent, so is his resurrection in the bruising by him of the serpent's head. Then he abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Then he destroyed death and him who has the power of it. Then he bruised Satan under his feet. Then he insured the success of that work which will not end till, in his second coming, death, the last foe, shall be destroyed. All this is dimly seen in the very first word of mercy to guilty man. Compare Gen. iii. 15; 2 Tim. i. 10; Heb. ii. 14; 1 Cor. xv. 26, 27.

2d, In the law of Moses we read a prefigurement. As in the slain goat we see a shadow of Christ's death, so in the scape-goat we see a shadow of his resurrection. Lev. xvi.

3d, But the scripture which most clearly and fully foretells this wonderful portion of the purpose of God in the mediation of his Son is the 16th Psalm. The apostle Peter on the day of Pentecost, quoting it, says, "David being a profet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins he would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne;

he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that his soul was not left in the unseen, neither did his flesh see corruption." And that this prediction was fulfilled in Jesus, he adds, "This Jesus hath God raised up, of which we all are witnesses," Ps. xvi. 8–11; Acts ii. 22–32.

4th, In allusion to this prediction of David we have another scripture which darkly hints at the resurrection of Christ, namely, Isa. lv. 3, "I will give you the faithful mercies of David." That is, the mercy foretold by David in Ps. xvi., and which is faithful and sure, inasmuch as God could not fail to accomplish his word. That this is the meaning we are plainly told by Paul in his discourse at Antioch, Acts xiii. 34–37. From the scripture in Isaiah we learn this glorious truth, that the resurrection of Christ is God's pledge of life to all who incline their ear and come to him. "Incline your ear and come to me; hear, and your soul shall live. And I will make an everlasting covenant with you, the faithful mercies of David." Intimating that as Christ has risen from the dead to everlasting life in glory, so surely will every soul which hears and obeys the voice of God.

5. No fact of history has more abundant evidence.

Christ's resurrection is good news which may be relied on with unshaken confidence, because it is evidenced by the eye-witness of his apostles, and five hundred who saw him alive after that he rose from the dead. Such is the argument from ver. 5–11.

6. It is the assurance of the believer's resurrection.

Christ's resurrection is good news because it is

God's pledge of the resurrection to everlasting life in glory of all who are one with him. Such is the argument from ver. 12–29 ; also from ver. 45–49, 57.

Conclusion—

1. Christ having died for your sins, think, dear friends, what he has suffered and accomplished for you. He has borne your sins in his own body upon the tree. He has paid the penalty of the holy law which you have broken. He has given satisfaction to the justice of God on your account. Through his atoning sacrifice it is now possible for God in righteousness as well as in mercy to forgive and acquit you, and to cleanse you from all unrighteousness. And having risen from the dead he has given a token that salvation is complete, and all for you.

2. The penalty being paid and the discharge thus given, what remains for you to do? Nothing to pay, for all is paid ; nothing to endure, for all is endured. As Cowper says :—

"Pay! follow Christ, and all is paid; his death your peace insures;
Think on the grave where he was laid, and calm descend to yours."

Only believe what God says, and take what he gives. In so doing you please God. In so doing you become one with Christ, and, accordingly, his death is laid to your account. His death becomes your life, and his resurrection your justification.

3. Why should you die when Christ has died for you? Why should you die when the way of life is so plain and so free?

CHAPTER VIII.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF BEING BOUGHT OFF FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW THROUGH THE CROSS OF CHRIST.

"For as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse. For it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them. Christ hath bought us off from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us. For it is written, Cursed is every one who hangeth upon a tree. That the blessing of Abraham in Jesus Christ might come unto the nations. That we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."—GAL. iii. 10–14.

HAVING seen that the great facts contained in the third unfolding of the gospel roll are the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, and also that Christ's death was for our sins; the inquiry very naturally arises, What did Christ accomplish in dying for our sins? The answer to this inquiry we have in the fourth unfolding of the roll, in the announcement, that "Christ hath bought us off from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us."

Into the meaning of this wonderful statement we might at once enter; but in order fully to see its beauty, prize its worth, and feel its power, it is needful that we first give heed to the foregoing view of the

sinner's case, from ver. 10. The more clearly men see the contrast of the law and the gospel, the state of the sinner and the work of the Saviour, the more sensible they will become of their real danger and of their need of Christ, and the extraordinary fitness of God's remedy to man's disease. Because men feel so little their sinfulness, guilt, and danger, they are fast asleep in their sins, and neglectful of the great salvation.

In this scripture, four things particularly are to be observed,—The inseparableness of the curse from man's dependence upon works of law; the consequent impossibility of deliverance by the law; the work of Christ in order to deliverance; and the blessings which flow from that work to all who believe in Jesus.

I. THE CERTAINTY OF THE CURSE OF THE LAW UPON THOSE WHO DEPEND FOR ACCEPTANCE WITH GOD UPON THE WORKS OF THE LAW.

Here are three things to be considered, namely, the position described, the state of those in this position, and the Scripture proof.

1. The position stated,—"*To be of the works of the law.*"

These words may be understood by considering their opposite—"*to be of faith,*" which we have in verses 7, 8, 9. Both terms are abridgments of what is fully worded in chap. ii. 16, and repeated twice,—"not justified by works of law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ." What strengthens this view still more, the same preposition, ἐκ, *of, out of, from,* and *by,* is used in

all these cases, although in the one scripture it is rendered *by*, and in the others *of*. By the help of chap. ii. 16, then, we would read these words more fully—"As many as seek to be justified by works of law." As the man who is of faith is a believer in Jesus, depending upon him alone for justification,—the man who is of works of law is an unbeliever, a self-righteous man, depending upon himself and upon his own good deeds for acceptance with God. As therefore the man who is of faith is justified by the faith of Jesus Christ, it follows that the man who is of works is not justified by the works of the law. The declaration of God to all men is—"By works of law no flesh shall be justified before him," Rom. iii. 20.

2. The state of those in this position—"*under a curse.*"

1st, To this the apostle plainly shows there is no exception. Let a man be ever so virtuous, and think himself safe and happy, as if he were under a blessing, even the blessing of both God and men, he is under a curse. "As many as are of the works of the law"—as many as think to be justified before God by works of law—"are under a curse."

2d, The curse here spoken of is the curse of the law, as given in the following words, and as fully stated in ver. 13. The curse of the law necessarily includes the wrath of the lawgiver, the sentence of condemnation, which is death, and the end everlasting fire.

3d, There is something dreadful in being under a curse. Even the curse of man is an object of terror

and dismay; as, for example, the curse of wicked priests and cruel fathers. But what is the curse of a fellow-worm, even in its most dreadful results, to the wrath and curse of Allmighty God? How awful the thought of a naked sword hanging over the head by a slender hair, and ready to drop every moment. And such is the curse which is hourly hanging over the sinner who trusts to his own good deeds for acceptance with his Maker. Should death find him in this state, the sword drops, the curse falls upon the guilty head, and the self-righteous soul is lost for ever.

3. The Scripture proof: "*For it is written, Cursed is every one who continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.*"

Upon careful reading, there is a seeming difference between the case stated and that named in the scripture quoted. The one is the case of the self-righteous, the other of the disobedient; the one of the man who trusts to his works, the other of the man who fails in works; the one of the man who leans on the law, the other of the man who breaks the law. But mark how powerfully the quotation tells. The self-righteous and the disobedient belong to one class. The most virtuous man on earth does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. "There is not a righteous man upon earth who doeth good and sinneth not." The best man in the world has failed to love God with all his heart and his neighbour as himself. Accordingly, it follows that the curse of the law rests upon the self-righteous as

truly as upon the most abandoned. There may be many more vicious, yet there is none more guilty, than the man who trusts to himself for acceptance with God. His guilt and curse are clear in this, that if he abides in many things, he abides not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them: that if he is right in many points, he yet offends in one, and accordingly is declared by God, the judge himself, to be "guilty of all," Deut. xxvii, 26; Eccl. vii. 20; Rom. iii. 23; Jas. ii. 10.

II. THE CONSEQUENT IMPOSSIBILITY OF JUSTIFICATION OR DELIVERANCE FROM THE CURSE OF THE LAW BY THE HELP OF THE LAW.

Here two things are to be observed, namely, the blessings opposed to the curse of the law, and reasons why these blessings are not found in the law.

1. The blessings opposed to the curse of the law.

In this scripture two of these blessings are named, the one inseparable from the other; namely, justification with God, and life to the justified,

1st, Justification with God. "To be justified, *παρα τω θεω*, *with* God," is a blessing of unspeakable worth. Into its full bearings we do not now enter, as we shall have occasion to do when we come to a farther unfolding of the gospel roll in Rom. iii. Enough now to state that it denotes acceptance with God, being viewed as righteous by him, and treated accordingly. As enjoyed by sinful men believing in Jesus, we see in it God not only reckoning righteousness, yea, right-

eousness without works, but also forgiving iniquities, covering sins, not reckoning sins, Rom. iv. 6–8. Thus, as the curse of the law involves the wrath of God and condemnation, deliverance from this curse implies the favour of God unto justification.

2d, Life to the justified is as sure as death to the condemned. This blessing is seen here in contrast with the curse of the law in the two quotations made by the apostle, in which we find life the grand object presented to view. And so it must be, both from the nature of this blessing, without which no other is of any avail, and also from the nature of the curse, which involves not only the wrath of God and the sentence of condemnation, but also death, which is destruction in everlasting fire. Life then, everlasting life, life with God in the heavenly glory, this alone can meet the case of sin-ruined man. "The righteous by faith shall live." As therefore the condemnation of sin is the condemnation of death, the justification of faith is the justification of life, Rom. v. 17, 18.

2. Evidence that justification with God is not in the law to those who are under its curse.

Here observe the truth stated and the evidence given.

1st, The solemn truth stated is, "That none is justified with God in law." That is, by anything required or provided in the law, there is no way opened up for transgressors being regarded and treated as righteous in the judgment of the holy and righteous lawgiver.

2d, The evidence given is twofold, and established

by Old Testament statements:—namely, that life is by faith, but the law is not by faith; from which it follows that life to the disobedient is not by the law.

(1.) Life is by faith. This Paul shows by a quotation from Hab. ii. 4—"The righteous shall live." Those who are righteous not in their own eyes, but in the eyes of God; not in their own righteousness, but in the righteousness of God. They shall live, live with God, live in his favour which is life, live for ever, live in glory. "The righteous shall live." By the decree of God, yea, from the nature of God and of men and of things, no other can. As God is righteous, the unrighteous must die. "The righteous shall live by faith." By faith in God, by believing whatever he hath spoken, by trusting to the righteousness which he hath provided. There is no other way of life than faith in God for any intelligent creature. Without faith in the righteousness of God there is no life for a fallen creature, at least for man.

(2.) The law is not by faith. That is to say, the demand of the law in order to life is not faith but works. This the apostle shows by a quotation from the law itself, as contained in Lev. xviii. 5, "He who doeth them." The man who obeys perfectly all the statutes and judgments of God, who abides in all things written in the book of the law to do them, "He shall live in them." He shall not be destroyed from among his people. The judgments by which transgressors are condemned to die shall not be visited upon the man who obeys the law in all things. He shall live in vir-

tue of his obedience. The law itself will guard the life of the obedient soul.

(3.) Accordingly, life to transgressors cannot be by the law. And as life is the blessing of the righteous, that is, of those who are just with God, it follows that justification before God is impossible through works of law, or through any obedience rendered by the unbeliever.

Let none therefore trust in his own righteousness. Let none look for acceptance with God to any virtue or goodness in himself. Let all remember that such dependence is vain, utterly vain. "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses as filthy rags." The man who trusts to his own righteousness in order to escape the wrath of God against his sins, is like the foolish ostrich which, in order to escape its pursuers, who are at its heels, hides its head in the sand, leaving its body exposed to destruction. In vain does the most swift-footed soul on earth look to himself or to the law for deliverance from the curse of the man who continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them.

III. The work of Christ in order to deliverance from the curse.

"*Christ hath bought us off from the curse of the law, having been made a curse for us,*" &c.

Here two things are to be observed, namely, what is meant by Christ buying us off, or redeeming us from the curse; and his becoming a curse in order

to this end. In all this we have a marvellous view of the good news of the gospel.

1. What is meant by Christ buying us off from the curse.

1st, The word *εξαγοραζω*, rendered to *redeem*, is literally to *buy*, to *buy off*. The simple verb, *αγοραζω*, denotes to buy as at the market. It is rendered to *buy* in various scriptures relating to the purchase made in the sacrifice of Christ. Thus, "Ye are bought with a price." "Denying the Lord who bought them," 1 Cor. vi. 20, vii. 23; 2 Pet. ii. 1. In the book of Revelation the same word is rendered to *redeem*. "Thou hast redeemed," that is, bought, "us to God through thy blood," Rev. v. 9, xiv. 3, 4. It is clear that the literal idea is paying a price in making a purchase; while the general idea is working deliverance by sacrifice, as in Israel's redemption from Egypt, when God gave the first born for their ransom, and when their mighty men perished in the Red Sea, Isa. xliii. 3, 4. The compound word used in our text is found also at chap. iv. 5, in reference to the death of Christ. In Efes. v. 16, Col. iv. 5, it is applied to making the best bargain of our precious time.

2d, The redemption of Christ involves two great truths,—namely, the purchase by Christ in his death, and the fruits of the purchase in the deliverance of those who believe. Both are called by the same name, —redemption.

The redemption spoken of in the words before us is clearly the purchase, the act of buying off in pay-

ing the price, in laying down the ransom in order to the deliverance. This is the redemption of Christ in order to the redemption of men; redemption price paid in order to redemption to be enjoyed. As in our examination of the glorious words in 1 Tim. i. 15, we found that Christ saved sinners in laying down his life in order to their salvation; so, here, in the same way, we find that Christ hath redeemed us, that is, bought us off, in laying down his life a ransom in order to our redemption. This is clear both from the following statement of what he became in buying us off, and also from the distinct mention of the design. Christ bought us off in being made a curse for us; we are bought off in getting the blessing of Abraham and the promise of the Spirit, which is through faith. Thus the voice of God is heard from the cross, saying to all, "Deliver from going down into the pit, I have found a ransom."

2. What is meant by Christ becoming a curse in order to buy us off from the curse.

1st, The Greek may be rendered either having been made, or having become, a curse for us. The one idea bespeaks his Father's surrender of him to die; and the other his own willing acquiescence; both precious truths. John x. 17, 18.

2d, The idea of Christ's becoming, or being made, a curse, seems most remarkable and unlikely, and therefore demands careful examination, in order both to a clear understanding, and to a view of the wisdom of God in the arrangement.

(1.) It is clear that Christ could not literally be made a curse; no more than he could literally be made sin, as we read in 2 Cor. v. 21. The truth, less figuratively, is, that a curse was laid upon him, and he bore the curse, even the curse of the law. The curse of the law is condemnation and death, both of which were laid upon Christ. As condemnation is a curse, Christ was made a curse in being condemned. As death is a curse, he was made a curse in being put to death.

(2.) The curse is seen still more in the extraordinary manner of Christ's death, namely, crucifixion. This the apostle shows in his scripture proof, "Cursed is every one who is hanged on a tree," Deut. xxi. 22, 23. To be nailed to a cross, and hung between heaven and earth till life was gone, was a punishment of the most humbling and revolting kind; it was a death of the most shameful and cruel description, the particulars of which are too horrible and harrowing to be detailed. It was altogether a dreadful and cursed death. The curse of man is upon it. Among the Romans it was assigned mainly to slaves and the worst of criminals. The curse of God is upon it, as upon hanging in any way. Hence the words of the law quoted by Paul are more fully, "He who is hanged is cursed by God." Thus as not only death, but also crucifixion was a curse, Christ was made a curse in not only dying, but in being crucified.

3d, In all this we see the curse of the law laid upon Christ in order to the removal of that curse

from men. Man's situation, "under a curse," because of his sin, is met by Christ entering into a like situation in behalf of man, and "becoming a curse for us." Not for himself, because he had no sin, but for us, because "Jehovah laid upon him the iniquity of us all," and that, in order to take it away from us.

4th, Here we see the wisdom of God in a mystery. The thoughtful mind cannot fail to be struck with the wonderful resemblance of the evil to be removed and the means employed. A curse taken away by a curse. The curse of the law lying upon man removed by its being laid upon Christ. The condemnation and death of sinners borne, and borne away, in the condemnation and death of the Son of God. Buying the guilty off from this curse by means of its endurance by the holy and righteous Jesus. In all this we have a striking illustration of a great healing maxim, "*Similia curantur similibus.*" Like cured by like. When we view the end gained we see another principle illustrated, namely, opposites gained by opposites. A blessing gained through a curse, justification through condemnation, life through death, a crown through a cross.

5th, In all this we see how Christ in his cross has bought us off from the curse; the curse of the law upon transgressors, the wrath of God, and the condemnation of everlasting death. Thus we have redemption in his blood. Well may we join with Paul in this same letter, and say, "Let it not be that I should boast, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

IV. The blessings designed for man in the endurance of the curse by Christ.

If we ask, Why has Christ become a curse for us; and why has he thereby bought us off from the curse of the law? the answer follows—"That the blessing of Abraham might be εν *in* Christ Jesus, εις *unto* the nations; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."

Here we find two great benefits intended and provided in the cross of Christ, made available to all men, but possessible only through believing.

1. The blessing of Abraham the first benefit designed.

1st, Here, it is interesting to observe a blessing instead of a curse; and that designed and obtained through the endurance of a curse.

2d, The blessing *of* Abraham is clearly the blessing enjoyed *by* Abraham, namely, justification by faith. It is so called here because it had been so fully alluded to in the foregoing passage from ver. 6–9, "Even as Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him unto righteousness, therefore know ye that they who are of faith the same are the children of Abraham." Here we have Abraham's blessing, and its inheritance by those who believe. Observe three steps—First, Abraham's believing what God said to him; then God blessing him by reckoning his faith as righteousness; and lastly, the fact that those who believe as Abraham did, receive the blessing which he received. "They

are blessed with believing Abraham," in their faith being reckoned unto righteousness, as his was.

3d, The design of God towards the nations as seen in the endurance of the curse by Christ. It was that justification might be in Christ for the nations, that is, for Gentiles as well as Jews. The word *that, in order that,* intimates the connection between the work of Christ and the end in view. Christ has bought us, and become a curse for us. Why? That he might be the source of a blessing, and that that blessing might become ours in him. Here observe—

(1.) The end in view is gained. Justification is in Christ Jesus; in his substitution, in his death, in his cross, in his condemnation for us.

(2.) This justification being in Christ for the nations, is free to all men alike. The word *εθνη*, here rendered *Gentiles*, is the same which in ver. 8 is rendered *heathen* and *nations*, and ought to have had the same rendering throughout. Here we see God's purpose of extending the blessing of justification by faith far beyond the bounds of Abraham's family, even to all the nations of the earth. Here we see how that purpose is fulfilled in the cross of Christ. The word *Gentiles* or *nations*, like the word *world*, in John iii. 16, teaches us that redemption having been purchased by Christ in order that justification might come to the nations, therefore the nations are welcome, Gentiles and Jews alike, and accordingly the individuals of the nations. As your name is in the word *world*, so is it in the word *nations*. As therefore we know that

God hath loved us in giving Christ, because he loved the world; so we know that Abraham's blessing is free to us in the cross of Christ, because it is free to the nations.

(3.) Whoever you are, therefore, O sinner, here is the good news—that Christ has paid a price for you in order to open the door of justification to you; that Abraham's blessing might be yours. What, then, remains? Only do as Abraham did, and you get what he got. Believe God in giving Christ to be a curse for you. Believe that Christ was made a curse for you. Believe in him bearing your curse in his condemnation and death on the cross. Then, like Abraham, your faith is counted to you for righteousness. Your sins are immediately pardoned, and you are justified with God. Who can, who will refuse?

2. The promise of the Spirit the other benefit designed in Christ's becoming a curse for us.

1st, As before we observed a blessing instead of a curse, so here we have a promise instead of a threatening. The threatening of death involved in the curse melts away into the promise of the Spirit inseparable from the blessing.

2d, The promise of the Spirit is the promise that God would pour out of his own holy Spirit upon all flesh, in order to the regeneration and sanctification of souls. This promise we have in ancient predictions, as in Isaiah xliv. 1–5, and Joel ii. 28–32. The promise also is again and again stated by the Lord Jesus and his apostles, Luke xi. 13; John vii. 37–39, xvi. 7–11.

3d, The design stated in our text teaches us that between the death of Christ and the bestowment of the holy Spirit upon men, there is now an inseparable and therefore necessary connection. Here, as before, we have the word *that, in order that;* intimating that Christ was made a curse for us that we might receive the promise of the Spirit. The necessity of Christ's death in order to the bestowment of the Spirit, is clearly seen in the words of Jesus and his apostle John in the Gospel, chap. vii. 37–39, "Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." Then mark the interpretation given: "This spake he concerning the Spirit which those believing on him were to receive; for the holy Spirit was not yet *given,* because Jesus was not yet glorified." These words teach us the necessity of Christ's death on the cross, and his return to his Father in glory, in order to the fulfilment of God's promise in the bestowment of his Spirit. The rock in the wilderness had the water, but in order to flow for Israel it had to be smitten with the rod of Moses. So the rock, the spiritual rock Christ, had the living water of the Spirit, but before the living water could gush out in order to the regeneration and life of the world, he must first be smitten with the rod of justice in the curse of the law. Compare Exod. xvii. 5, 6, and Num. xx. 7–11, with 1 Cor. x. 4.

4th, The promise of Christ's Spirit is received through faith; through faith in Christ; through faith in the cross.

As Christ must die in order that the holy Spirit might be given, it naturally follows that we must believe in him that the Spirit may be received. Hence the apostle says, "We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." As the purchase of Christ's cross was necessary to the outpouring of the Spirit, so our faith in that cross is necessary to our reception of the Spirit. As God gives the promise of the Spirit through the cross, it follows that we cannot receive the Spirit promised but as we receive the cross. This is God's wonderful and gracious arrangement. The words of Jesus himself teach us that as we must come to the water in order to drink, so we must come to him, we must believe in him, in order to get the living water of the holy Spirit. In so doing we receive an unfailing supply of spiritual grace and heavenly gifts, in the perpetual flowing of the indwelling Spirit of him in whom we believe and abide. Faith, in taking Jesus, God's first gift, gets more; not only the Son of God, but also the Spirit of God; not only Jesus in order to our justification, but also the holy Spirit in order to our sanctification. Thus while by Jesus in our hearts we are brought into the friendship of God, also by his holy Spirit in our hearts we are brought into the likeness of God. As by Jesus in us we have the hope of glory, so by his Spirit in us we have the earnest of glory. As, therefore, the Spirit is received through faith in Jesus, it remains for all gospel hearers to believe in Jesus, that they may receive the promise of the Spirit.

Conclusion—

1. In this unfolding of the Gospel roll every one must see two great objects—the *curse*, and the *cross*. Also that God has wonderfully set them over against one another, just as in nature there is not a poison without its antidote. The curse the portion of sinners; the cross borne by the Saviour. The curse the dead weight which sinks the soul into everlasting fire; the cross the refuge, the only refuge, from the curse. Friend, may I ask you, which will you have? You yourself must decide. The one or the other you must have. If you will not flee to the cross, then you must abide the curse, and that for ever. You do not wish the curse, then you must flee to the cross, and that this very day.

2. From this view of the Gospel roll, every one may see why the cross, with all its pain and shame, is an object of glorying and boasting to the believer in Jesus; why the word of the cross, which to those who perish is foolishness, to those who are saved is the power of God. Here we can see why Christ crucified is to the self-righteous a stumbling-block, and to the self-conceited foolishness; but to those who believe, to those who are the called, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. In this cross we have a concentration of glories; the brightest view of the perfections of God, the most extraordinary display of love and condescension which the world ever saw, the only foundation of the sinner's hope towards God, the mountain top from which alone man can rise to an

eternal crown, the double power which both crucifies to the present world and meetens for the world to come. With all this in his eye, we can understand why Paul, wherever he went, determined to know nothing, to own nothing, to make known nothing, but Christ, and him crucified; and why he desired and aimed to boast in nothing but in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ, by which the world was crucified to him and he to the world.

3. To those who are yet halting between two opinions we would say, Seeing that Calvary's cross is the only hiding-place from the lightnings and thunders of Sinai, why not at once flee? "Escape for your life, look not behind you, stay not in all the plain, escape to the mountain, lest ye be consumed." As Christ's work is perfect, at once embrace it.

"Hark! the voice of love and mercy
Sounds aloud from Calvary!
See, it rends the rocks asunder,
Shakes the earth, and veils the sky!
'It is finished,'
Hear the dying Saviour cry."

As Christ has stooped low enough, and endured pain and shame enough, and all for you, why crucify him afresh, why tread him under foot by your neglect and unbelief? As the cross is God's plan of deliverance from the curse, let that be enough for you; at once bow to his matchless wisdom, and thank and adore him for his grace. Let men reckon it foolishness and weakness as they may. Your reply is, It is the foolishness and weakness of God, which is wiser and

stronger than men. The brazen serpent might seem foolishness, but it was power, the only power, to heal the bitten Israelites; so Calvary's cross is the only plan and the only power to remove the curse which is hanging over the guilty.

4. Surely the two great blessings in this unfolding of the roll are enough to rouse every one to instant faith in Christ crucified. Who would not have Abraham's blessing, and be a friend of God? Who would not have the promise of the holy Spirit, and enjoy the likeness of his Maker? As these blessings come through the cross of Christ, and through faith in that cross, look to Jesus, and they are yours.

CHAPTER IX.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF GOD'S POWER TO SAVE THOSE WHO BELIEVE THROUGH A RIGHTEOUSNESS WHICH IS BY BELIEVING.

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth: to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein the righteousness of God by faith is revealed unto faith: as it is written, The righteous shall live by faith."—ROM. i. 16, 17.

IN this fifth unfolding of the Gospel roll we have a glorious view of its amazing virtue. It is not so much a statement of what the gospel is, as of what it does. It is an exhibition of its power to save, and of the grand secret of that power. Here we see what it can do, and how and why.

1. The opening word, "*I am not ashamed,*" is the key-note of the whole. The grand idea is that the gospel is worthy of the glory and boast of men. No man who is a believer in it, or a preacher of it, needs hide his face or blush. He has rather occasion to lift up his head with holy pride and heavenly joy. Men might be ashamed of the gospel, as many were, because of its humbling doctrines, and restraining requirements, and because of the self-denial and reproach, the loss

and suffering attendant upon its profession. But none of these things moved Paul, whose words these are. He looked at its God-like features; his mind was swayed by its wonderful fitness and glorious results.

2. The gospel, like the Old Testament predictions of the coming Saviour, has two sides; the lowly and the lofty, the suffering and the reigning, the human and the divine. The unbeliever, like the Jew of Paul's day, looks at only one side; he sees its humbling features, and turns away from it with cold neglect. The believer, like Paul, looks at both sides; and while he sees much which calls for self-denial, yet his mind is drawn towards it, and rejoices in it, by a view of its beauty and glory, and perfect suitableness to his case. The God-like and the God-full which are in it cast into the shade all the shame and humiliation of its doctrines and its profession. Accordingly, he rejoices to join with Paul in saying, "I am not ashamed of the gospel."

3. There are many reasons why the gospel is an object of glory, and therefore why none should be ashamed of it. As, for example, the simple truth that it is good news; and, still more, such good news. We may be ashamed of some news, but who is ashamed of good news? and, still more, good news from God, good news about God, and about his Son Jesus Christ, and salvation and eternal life for the children of men? Why should any one be ashamed of the gospel, seeing it is glad tidings of the love of God in the gift of his Son in order to our everlasting salvation? In short, all its relations and features and facts are glo-

rious, and therefore worthy of the trust and boast of all mankind.

4. In the scripture before us the apostle, without giving all the reasons, gives ample reason why he was not ashamed of the gospel—namely, what it has power to do, and why. Notice the two causative particles *for*. Indeed, we may notice another at the beginning of our text, leading us further back—"I am ready to preach the gospel to you who are at Rome." Why? "*For* I am not ashamed of it." Why? "*For* it is the power of God unto salvation to every one who believeth." Why? "*For* in it the righteousness of God by faith is revealed unto faith."

Two leading thoughts are here presented to view—namely, why we should not be ashamed of the gospel; and why it is the power of God to save.

I. THE GOSPEL IS WORTHY OF BOAST, AND NOT OF SHAME, BECAUSE IT IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE ALL WHO BELIEVE IN IT.

In this statement four thoughts demand attention: power, God's power, power to save, power to save those who believe. Power, it will be observed, is the one idea which runs through the whole as enough to banish shame.

1. The gospel is power; therefore, unless we are ashamed of power, we should not be ashamed of the gospel.

1st, The gospel is power contrasted with the weakness of the law unable to save the guilty. It is power

suited to the weakness of man unable to save himself, Rom. viii. 3, v. 6. The believer in Jesus is one who, like Paul, knows what the gospel can do—knowing, as he does, what it has done for himself, in bringing to him pardon and peace, salvation and life. His language, therefore, is, "I am not ashamed of the gospel."

2d, None is ashamed of power, of whatever kind. All men love and admire power, both of body and of mind, of birth and rank, of riches and lordship. Power and shame are as incompatible as power and weakness, light and darkness. Ignorance only can be ashamed of that which has power. And so it is with the gospel and those who know it. Those who are ashamed of the gospel know not its power. It has done nothing for them, otherwise it would be their boast and their joy. Ignorance only calls it weakness. Ignorance only treats it with refusal and neglect.

2. The gospel is God's power; therefore, as we are not ashamed of the power of God, we should not be ashamed of the gospel.

1st, The power of God is here spoken of, not in a primary, but secondary sense. It is not the power which he has, but power which he employs. It is the power of an agent, as seen in his instrument; of an author, as displayed in his plan. As the plan may be called the power of him who devised it, and the instrument the power of him who made it, or of him who wields it, so is the gospel the power of God. It is his plan, his instrument possessing full power to accom-

plish his purpose, and accomplishing it daily. As fire and air, earth and water, light and heat, sun and rain, are God's power in nature, so is the gospel in grace. As those are God's power in matter, so is this his power in mind. As the word of the cross and Christ crucified form the very marrow and substance of the gospel, these are in like manner called the power of God, 1 Cor. i. 18, 23–25.

2d, The special nature of God's power in the gospel demands attention. The kind of power varies according to the kind of subject to which it belongs, or according to the design of the instrument, and the kind of object on which it works. As it relates to matter or to mind, it is material, or mental, or moral. The power of God in the gospel is not material, but mental and moral power. It has to do with mind or spirit, with the heart and will, the affections and dispositions, the conscience, character and conduct, the present condition and eternal destiny of men. The influence which it puts forth and the change which it works being moral, its power is therefore moral power.

3d, The gospel is God's power upon mind in much the same way with the Scriptures at large, but to a greater extent than any other portion of his revealed will. "The word of God is living and powerful, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrows, being a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." And so it is with the gospel. Where the word of a king is there is power; much more with the word of

him who is King of kings, and Lord of lords. The word of God is a light and a fire, a hammer and a sword—all instruments of material power, the power of force; and this illustrative of moral power, the power of truth. As a light and a fire, a hammer and a sword, the law was the power of God in Israel. As a light and fire, hammer and sword, the gospel is the power of God among men. As light has power to banish darkness, so has the gospel. As fire has power to melt and to burn, so has the gospel. As a hammer and a sword have power severally to break, to pierce, and to slay, so has the gospel. The gospel being God's power, is powerful for God, Jer. xxiii. 29; 2 Cor. x. 4, 5. Those who call the gospel weakness know it not; they know not its power, nor its author; they know not its design nor its results. Call it weakness as they may, it is our joy and glory to know that it is God's, and therefore the weakness of God. Of this we cannot be ashamed, because it is stronger than men, 1 Cor. i. 23–25.

3. The gospel is God's power unto salvation; therefore, unless we are ashamed of being saved, we should not be ashamed of the gospel.

1st, Unto salvation—that is, in order to accomplish the salvation of men. As Noah's flood was God's power to destroy, so is Christ's gospel his power to save. That was the power of righteousness and wrath; this the power of righteousness and love. That was the power of justice and judgment, bringing in the flood of destruction upon the world of the ungodly;

this the power of mercy and grace, bringing deliverance from sin and woe to the guilty.

2d, The gospel is God's power unto salvation, because it is his plan by which he is accomplishing the salvation of millions of the children of men—by which he is delivering them from the darkness and condemnation, the pollution and punishment of sin. It is his power to save from darkness; for through it he enlightens the benighted mind, bringing the soul out of the darkness of ignorance into his own marvellous light. It is his power to save from condemnation, from the curse of the law and the wrath of the lawgiver; for through it he pardons the guilty and justifies the ungodly—bringing them into reconciliation and peace, acceptance and friendship, with himself. It is his power to save from the pollution and lordship of sin; for through it he regenerates the soul, and renews the mind—changing the inclinations and affections of the heart, moulding them anew after his own holy image, putting within them his own holy Spirit, and hereby making them like himself, and meet for heavenly glory. It is his power to save from the punishment of sin in the world of woe; for through it he delivers from everlasting fire, and raises to everlasting life in the kingdom of glory. In all this the gospel is truly its own witness; for it has already proved itself to be God's power in saving thousands upon thousands of Adam's race.* And its glory is all the greater, because nothing else can save. There is no other name but

* See Fuller's excellent treatise, "The Gospel its own Witness."

Christ's given under heaven among men by which we may be saved. And shall we be ashamed of that which is God's; of that which saves—of that which saves from sin and wrath and ruin—of that which alone can save from death and hell?

4. The gospel is God's power to save every one who believeth; therefore, unless we are ashamed of believing God, we should not be ashamed of the gospel.

1st, It is to be observed that the gospel and salvation and faith are three things which God has joined together. The gospel is a fact—something already done in the work of Christ; salvation is deliverance granted now, and fully to be enjoyed in the heavenly glory. This blessing is the boon provided in the gospel. If we ask what is the link which joins the past to the future, the fact and the blessing? the answer is faith. Faith in the fact insures the blessing. Faith in the cross reared 1800 years ago insures the crown through all eternity. Without faith in the work done by Christ, the blessing is unreachable. Hence, while the gospel is the power of God, and his power to save, it is such only to those who believe in it, receiving its facts as the truth of God, and personally relying on them for salvation.

2d, It is a great matter to understand and to bear in mind, how the belief of the gospel is in the very nature of things essential to salvation. This will be seen when we consider that, unless it be received into the mind, and get a place in the heart, it can do us no good. It must be in the mind in order to become

as it were a portion of the man, so as to link in him its facts and its blessings. It must be in the heart in order to deliver from the darkness and condemnation, the love and pollution, the power and punishment, of sin. Into the mind and heart the gospel gets by attention to it and faith in it.

3d, It is with the gospel as with our daily bread. As the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, so is bread the power of God unto life. But as the living power of bread is seen and is possible only in eating, so is the saving power of the gospel only in believing. As food must be in the body in order to satisfy the cravings of hunger, and renew the daily wasting energies of the frame, so must the bread of life be in the mind in order to the spiritual life and daily nourishment of the soul. Hence it necessarily follows that, as food can do us good only as it is eaten, so the gospel can do us good only as it is believed.

4th, In all this we see the power of God and the power of the gospel and the power of faith inseparably combined. God has power to save souls, but he puts forth his power in the gospel. Accordingly, the gospel has power to save souls, but this power is brought out into action only in believing. Hence, when we say faith has power to save, it is faith only as it is fixed upon the gospel. There was power in Christ to heal the woman who had an issue of blood, but her faith was the means of bringing that power into action. Hence, when she touched his garment, he perceived that power or virtue to heal her had gone forth from

him. Her faith had power to bring Christ's power into operation. So your faith in the gospel has power to bring God's power into operation. And as her faith in Christ healed her disease, so your faith in the gospel will save your soul.

5th, It is our joy to know that this arrangement reaches to every soul of man who will avail himself of it. Is the gospel the power of God? It is. Is it his power to save? It is. Is it his power to save those who believe? It is. How many? Is it some here and others there? The answer is, "Every one who believeth." The soul, therefore, which is not saved, is either one who has never heard the gospel, or who, having heard, has not believed. Here then is glory; salvation by faith and not by works—salvation free to all. Only believe. Knowing this, we cannot be ashamed of the gospel.

5. When the apostle adds, "to the Jew first, and also to the Greek," we understand this to refer to the fact that Jesus was sent first to his own people; and that in like manner he instructed his apostles to begin at Jerusalem. Now, however, that this has been done in the beginning of the gospel, there is no longer any distinction between Jew and Gentile, "for the same Lord over all is rich unto all who call upon him; for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

(1.) Before going further we ask you to weigh the truths now presented. It is for all who hear the gospel to show that they are not ashamed of it by be-

lieving in it. It is for all who believe in the gospel to show that they are not ashamed of it by acknowledging it before men. If you are true believers, you must; yea, you will, Rom. x. 8–11. It is for you my brethren who believe and acknowledge the gospel, to show still more that you are not ashamed of it, by being ready like Paul, to publish it anywhere, everywhere, in season, and out of season.

(2.) To all we would say, If you are not ashamed of God, or of his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, show it by not being ashamed of the gospel; for God is its author, and Christ its beginning and end. If you are not ashamed of power, of moral power, of the power of truth, and of the power of God; if you are not ashamed of salvation and of everlasting life, be not ashamed of the gospel.

(3.) Let all remember that the day is coming when those who live ashamed of the gospel will be ashamed of themselves, and with trembling and horror, wish to be hid from him who sitteth upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb.

II. THE GOSPEL IS GOD'S POWER TO SAVE ALL WHO BELIEVE IN IT, BECAUSE IN IT GOD'S RIGHTEOUSNESS BY FAITH IS REVEALED IN ORDER TO FAITH.

In our version we read, "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith." But as we see no satisfactory meaning in this, we will endeavour to give what we believe to be the true rendering,

and necessary to express the thought intended. Three changes we propose.

1. As the Greek εκ πιστεως, rendered "*from* faith," is the very same as the last words of the verse, rendered "*by* faith;" and as this last is clearly the right rendering, we read both alike, "*by* faith." Both clauses present faith as a means; righteousness by faith, and life by faith. This same rendering we have in many other scriptures, and the same truth taught. See chap. iii. 22, 30; Fil. iii. 9; Gal. ii. 16, iii. 7–9, 11. It is thus "the righteousness of God by faith."

2. Inasmuch as the righteousness of God by faith thus stands connectedly as the subject of assertion, the word *revealed* must be read after. Thus the truth taught is that the righteousness of God by faith is revealed in the gospel.

3. The words, εις πιστιν, rendered "*to* faith," are more forcibly and properly, *into* or *unto* faith, that is, *in order to* faith. In the former verse the same word is rendered *unto*, denoting *in order to*, namely, salvation. Thus we have the design of the revelation of God's righteousness by faith, namely, in order to faith, that is, in order to be believed.

The whole passage, then, may be read thus: "For in it, that is, in the gospel, the righteousness of God by believing is revealed in order to believing; as it is written, The righteous shall live by believing." While our version follows former translations,—Wycliffe, Tyndale, and others,—some expositors, such as Doddridge,

Haldane, and Barnes, give the same idea with that which we have here set forth.

As in the former statement, we have seen in the gospel the one idea of power enough to banish shame, so in this we see the one idea of righteousness enough to demonstrate power. And as in the former, we have seen four reasons why we should not be ashamed of the gospel, so here we see four reasons why the gospel is the power of God to save every one who believeth.

1. The gospel is power, because in it righteousness is revealed.

We have seen that the power of the gospel is moral, that it is the power of truth in the minds and hearts and lives of men. But what moral power could there be without righteousness? The helplessness of man is his want of righteousness, his guilt and condemnation as a transgressor of the holy and righteous law of God. The gospel then could not save him if it did not bring righteousness to him. But it is power because in it is unvailed to men a righteousness ample enough to cover all their sins.

2. The gospel is God's power, because the righteousness revealed in it is God's righteousness.

1st, The righteousness of God is a term variously employed in Scripture; and on this account is very ready to be misunderstood, as indeed it has been by many. Its importance is such that it demands the most careful inquiry. A clear understanding of it will lead to a brighter view of the beauties and glories of the gospel. Its use in Scripture is fourfold—namely,

God's justice, his requirements, his judgments, the atonement. These are called righteousness, because they are all righteous; and God's righteousness, because they all belong to God. The last three are called the righteousness of God, because they are all manifestations of it, the effects being named after the cause. The righteousness of God denotes sometimes, and in its primary meaning, his justice—that perfection of his nature in virtue of which he cannot fail to do what is right. This seems to be the meaning in Rom. iii. 5, 25, 26. Sometimes it is his requirements, his laws and precepts, which being like the righteous lawgiver, are necessarily righteous laws, just requirements. Thus the righteousness which God requires is called his righteousness in James i. 20. Sometimes it is his judgments in which, according to his justice, he rewards the obedient and punishes the transgressors; these rewards and punishments being like himself and his requirements, all righteous. Thus the righteousness which he executes is called his righteousnesses, or, as in our version, "righteous acts," Judges v. 11. And sometimes it is neither the righteousness which he requires, nor which he executes, but that which he has provided in the mediation and atonement of his Son, in order to the combined satisfaction of justice, and the justification of sinners who believe in Jesus. This we take to be the righteousness spoken of in the scripture before us; as also in chap. iii. 21–26; Fil. iii. 9; 2 Cor. v. 21. Tyndale, apprehending the distinctive idea, renders the words here, and chap. iii. 21,

with a supplement, "the righteousness *which cometh* of God."

2d, This fourfold righteousness is seen in the gospel; but the others being seen in the law, it is this fourth which is specially revealed in the gospel. In the good news of salvation to sinners, we have the righteousness which God has provided in order to the pardon of those who, not having fulfilled the righteousness required, are exposed to the righteousness executed in the punishment of sin. This cannot be the righteousness which God requires or executes, because it is a righteousness without the law, as we see in chap. iii. 21. It is a righteousness which God has provided, because it is a righteousness revealed in the gospel, a righteousness by faith, a righteousness revealed in order to faith, and therefore to be received. What is here called the righteousness of God, is also called a righteousness, εκ θεου, *from* God, Fil. iii. 9. Those who receive this righteousness are also said to become righteousness—to be made the righteousness of God in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 21. All of which shows that the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel, is righteousness provided, righteousness to be received and enjoyed.

3d, The righteousness of God revealed in the gospel is also called the righteousness of Christ; as Peter words it, "the righteousness of our God and Saviour Jesus Christ," 2 Pet. i. 1. It is God's, because he is the author; Christ's, because he is the mediator; God's, because it is from him; Christ's, because it is by him.

It is God's plan and Christ's work. The righteousness of God in the gospel is the substitution and sacrifice of Jesus Christ in the room and for the sins of men. It is righteousness, because Christ the substitute of man is the righteous one; because it is a righteous thing with God to make the work and sufferings and death of one available to the pardon and salvation and life of others; because it is righteous for God to give up his holy Son Jesus to die, the righteous for the unrighteous, so as to render it possible for justice and mercy to combine in opening up a way, a righteous and merciful, a new and living way to the pardon and justification of every sinner who will believe in Jesus, and thus receive the righteousness provided. The righteousness of God in the gospel, therefore, is the righteousness of atonement, in order to the righteousness of the guilty; the righteousness of obedience unto death, in order to the righteousness of justification unto life. The righteousness of God in the gospel is the robe of righteousness provided as a covering, and the only covering, for sinful, naked, helpless souls, Isa. lxi. 10.

4th, The righteousness of God revealed and provided in the gospel is gloriously fitted to the guilty condition of men. The friendship of God is impossible without righteousness. Man, having broken the law and come short of the glory of the lawgiver, has no righteousness. What men call their own righteousnesses, God calls filthy rags, Isa. lxiv. 6. Had God therefore not provided another righteousness, a right-

eousness not of the sinner, but of the substitute, not of man, but of God in Christ, there had been no righteousness to man, and therefore no way of friendship with his Maker. But here is the power of the gospel, that in it righteousness is revealed; and here is God's power in the gospel, that the righteousness which it reveals is God's righteousness. The obedience unto death of the Son of God for the sons and sins of men, has power to work deliverance from condemnation, and to cleanse from all unrighteousness, because it is the righteousness provided for this express purpose. Hence the apostle tells us that "he who knew no sin, was made sin for us,"—that is, was made to suffer for our sin, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him,"—that is, that God's righteousness in the substitution of Christ might become ours, and we reckoned as righteous in the righteousness of our substitute, 2 Cor. v. 21.*

3. The gospel is God's power unto salvation, because his righteousness revealed in it is righteousness by faith.

We have seen the connection between power and righteousness, the power of God and the righteousness of God; now we are to see the connection between power unto salvation, and righteousness which becomes ours through believing. Were the gospel a revelation of righteousness by works, it could do no more for man than the law. It is our joy to know that it has

* See Haldane's Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans, chap. i. 16, 17, iii. 21.

power to save, and why, but because it has power to justify? And here is its justifying power—that it reveals and provides righteousness, not our own, but another's; not by works of our own, but by the work of Christ, and which therefore becomes ours as we receive it. It is therefore righteousness by faith. Hence this righteousness, while unto all, is upon all who believe. Hence the word of faith which we preach is this—"That if thou shalt acknowledge with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart it is believed unto righteousness, and with the mouth it is acknowledged unto salvation." As Christ is the end of the law in order to righteousness to every one who believeth, it is clear that righteousness becomes ours, not by works of our own, but by the work of Christ. As Christ's work therefore can become ours only by faith in him, this righteousness can become ours only by the same faith. Hence God's righteousness in Christ is righteousness by believing. Thus the gospel is the power of God to save, not only because it is the righteousness of God, but also because the righteousness revealed and provided in it is by faith and not by works.

4. The gospel is God's power to save every one who believeth, because his righteousness which he has provided is revealed in it in order to be believed.

This we have already stated to be one grand truth taught in the proper rendering of the apostle's words, "Revealed unto faith." From which we learn that the

end of the gospel revelation must necessarily accord with the means of the gospel power. As, therefore, it is a righteousness by believing, it is revealed in order to be believed. Had it been a righteousness by works, as was that of the law, it would have been revealed in order to be wrought. But being already wrought by Christ, it is revealed in order to be received. It is unveiled in the gospel to be seen in the gospel,—revealed in the word to be received into the heart,—revealed by God to be received by man,—revealed in love to be received in faith,—revealed in grace to be received in gratitude. As we have already seen, the righteousness is a robe, a finished robe, a robe of richest materials, with wrought gold, Ps. xlv. 13. For what, then, is it wrought, for what is it finished, but to be put on and worn by the children of men? The same great truth is taught by the apostle John near the close of his Gospel narrative. Speaking of things which Jesus did, he says, "These are written." Why? "That ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." And why must we believe? "That believing ye might have life in his name." The same also is the great end for which the gospel is preached to every creature—namely, that the righteousness which it unvails may be received and enjoyed, and thus souls saved. Thus the gospel is power—God's power, power to save, power to save every one who believeth. In it is revealed righteousness, God's righteousness, righteousness by believing, righteousness revealed in order to be believed.

5. All this the apostle shows to be evident from the words of the prophet Habakkuk, "*The righteous shall live by faith.*"

Having already expounded these words as quoted in Gal. iii. 11, exposition is not necessary here. This much we may observe from the connection in which they are here quoted—As the righteousness of God is by faith, and not by works, two things follow—

1st, Those who receive God's righteousness become righteous in so doing—that is, by faith in Christ's satisfaction of justice in his atonement for sin.

2d, Becoming righteous by faith, they live; they pass from death unto life; they live by faith. As righteousness and life become theirs by believing, they cannot be condemned—they cannot die for ever; they live, and live for ever, by believing. They live by the same simple trust in the righteousness of God which they exercised when first they came to Jesus.

Conclusion—

1. Here we have another glorious view of the wonderful fitness of the gospel to the case of man. What the sinner is in danger of is death—everlasting death because of sin. Here, then, is life. But being condemned, righteously condemned, he cannot have life without righteousness. Here is righteousness provided and revealed in order to everlasting life.

2. As faith in the righteousness of God is the grand duty, the indispensable requirement, of every soul in order to the benefit, we therefore solemnly warn all

to beware lest they fall into the snare of the Jews. Be not, like them, ignorant of God's righteousness. Get to know and understand it. Read and think over again the explanation of it. Do not go about to establish your own righteousness. You may as well go about praising rags, filthy rags. Submit to God's righteousness. Put on the wedding garment—the best robe—the robe of the Redeemer's righteousness. As God comes to you in grace, bringing near his righteousness, meet him in humble gratitude, and take the righteousness which he brings. Put away the rags, or die. Put on the robe, and live for ever. Let your song be—

"Jesus, thy robe of righteousness
My beauty is, my glorious dress;
Mid flaming worlds, in this arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."

CHAPTER X.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD IN JUSTIFYING ALL WHO BELIEVE, THROUGH THE PROPITIATION PROVIDED IN CHRIST.

"Now we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to those who are in the law. . . . . And now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets. The righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ is unto all and upon all who believe; for there is no difference: for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God: being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood," &c.—Rom. iii. 19-31.

In this memorable scripture we have what we reckon our sixth unfolding of the Gospel roll, and an enlarged view of the righteousness of God in the justification of sinners. To prepare our way more fully, and our minds more clearly, for a thorough consideration and unclouded understanding of this exhibition of the good news, it is needful fully to understand, and therefore to consider, the foregoing statements of the guilt and helplessness of mankind. Accordingly, we begin with ver. 19.

In meditation on this scripture, we notice the universality of the world's guilt; the consequent impossi-

bility of justification before God by works of law; the manifestation of the righteousness of God without law; the terms, freeness, and blessings of this righteousness; the design in the redemption and propitiation of Christ; the exclusion of boasting; and the establishment of the law through believing.

I. THE UNIVERSALITY OF THE GUILT OF MANKIND AS TRANSGRESSORS OF THE LAW OF GOD.

"Now we know that whatsoever things the law saith, it saith to those who are in the law," &c.

Here notice the law speaking; those to whom it speaks; and the design.

1. The law speaking.

1st, The law of God is seen in the ten commandments, but more largely in all the precepts and promises, threatenings and declarations of guilt, as primarily addressed to Israel, but generally applicable to all mankind. We are authorised thus to understand the law here named because of the foregoing quotations from ver. 10–18, in which we have scriptures gathered, not out of the law of Moses, but out of the psalms and the profets, and designed to exhibit the fearful consequences of sin to all men, as distinctly stated in ver. 9.

2d, The things spoken by the law, specially referred to, seem to be those statements of total and universal depravity, beginning from ver. 10, "There is none righteous, no, not one." This may be seen also from the design here stated.

2. Those to whom the law speaks are said to be *in*

the law. Our version says "*under* the law,"—an expression fully warranted by other scriptures, such as Gal. iii. 22, iv. 4, 5, where the preposition is ὑπο, *under*. But here it is εν, *in*, and so it is properly rendered by Wycliffe. The same we have chap. ii. 12–23.

1st, To be in the law is to be within the reach, within the bounds, of the law, and therefore bound to obey all its requirements, and answerable for disobedience; and where disobedient, accordingly included in these foregoing declarations of guilt.

2d, This, in a varied sense, is the position of both Jews and Gentiles. The Jews were in the law, as contained in the living oracles of God. The Gentiles who had not this written law, and who had sinned therefore without law, had yet the work of the law written in their hearts, chap. ii. 12–15. All men of every kindred are under law to God, being bound by the very nature of things to love their Maker with all their hearts, and their neighbour as themselves.

3. The design of the things spoken in the law—that is, of these statements of the unrighteousness and ungodliness of all men. Here two designs are stated—namely, personal conviction and demonstration of universal guilt.

1st, These statements of the law are made in order to personal conviction,—"*That every mouth may be stopped.*" The mouth of every Jew and every Gentile —all classes and all characters. The stopping of the mouth implies the readiness of man to justify himself; of all men, when accused of sin, to plead not guilty.

The mouth is stopped when evidence is given, when witnesses are brought forward establishing the truth of the charge. Thus it is with a criminal in court, who, knowing his guilt, yet opens his mouth and dares to say, "Not guilty." Thus it is with the self-righteous sinner. You say you are righteous; the law says, "There is none righteous; no, not one." In vain, therefore, may the virtuous plead uprightness; in vain may the young plead innocence. Here is the law saying, "They are all gone out of the way; they are all together become unprofitable; there is none who doeth good, no, not one."

2d, The result is that the guilt of all men before God is manifest. "*The whole world guilty before God.*" The idea is the guilt of the criminal at the bar established in the eyes of the judge, notwithstanding the plea of innocence. And so it is with every child of Adam in actual transgression. You have not loved God with all your heart; therefore although you may seem innocent in your own eyes, and righteous in the eyes of others, yet you are guilty before God, the holy and righteous Judge of all mankind. Thus it behoves every one to say with the psalmist,—"If thou, Jehovah, shouldest mark iniquities, O Jehovah, who shall stand?" "And enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified." And, with Daniel, let every one say, "Lord, righteousness belongeth to thee, but to us confusion of faces, as at this day." Whoever you are, O friend, cease to plead innocence, cease to take comfort from your

uprightness; the law of God declares you guilty, and guilty you must therefore be before the lawgiver. "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

II. THE CONSEQUENT IMPOSSIBILITY OF JUSTIFICATION BEFORE GOD BY WORKS OF LAW.

"*Therefore by works of law shall no flesh be justified in his sight.*"

Here observe justification in the sight of God, and the weakness of works to justify any of the children of men.

1. Justification before God is the great concern of man.

1st. To be justified is to be approved as righteous, and to be declared and treated accordingly. In the case of sinners before God, they are condemned because of sin. When justified they are delivered from condemnation. This does not imply that they are innocent, or declared innocent, which is impossible to truth and justice. It implies that, though guilty, they are treated as righteous. In the language of David and of Paul, their iniquities are forgiven, their sins are covered, sin is not reckoned to them. Although they have sinned, their sins are not laid to their account; but God reckons righteousness to them, and righteousness without any works of theirs, Ps. xxxii. 1, 2; Rom. iv. 6–8.

2d. There can be no greater concern for men than to be righteous in the sight of their Maker. If God justifies us, all is well. If the Allmighty himself clears us from every charge, then we may rest happy, because

we are safe. If the Judge of all the earth himself frees us from condemnation, then we may lift up our heads and say, "Who shall lay any thing to our charge? Shall God who justifieth? Who is he who condemneth? Shall Christ who died?" O sinner, rest not, sleep not, till you know that God himself justifies you.

2. Justification before God cannot be ours by works of law. Two reasons are here given by the apostle:—

1st, Inference from the foregoing statements establishing the guilt of all men. This is seen in the word "*therefore.*" As if the apostle had said, all being guilty before God, every mouth being stopped, there being none righteous, no, not one, it follows that none can be made righteous by any obedience or virtue of his own. All being guilty, all are condemned. Ten thousand good deeds can never atone for one bad deed. The payment of all future debts can never make up for the non-payment of past debts. Moreover, even for the future, the best of our deeds being mingled with sin, one deed, however good, can never atone for another.

2d, Knowledge of sin, but not of salvation, comes by the law. That the knowledge of sin is by the law, we learn from what the law says. It speaks of precepts, and of promises to the obedient, and of threatenings to the disobedient. It declares the disobedience and guilt of all men, but it provides pardon for none. By the law we get to know, not only that sin is, but

also what sin is, and what it deserves, and what it will assuredly bring to the guilty,—namely, the wrath and curse of the lawgiver. Robert Haldane, on this scripture, says—"Paul here means to affirm that the law convicts men of being sinners. . . . . But how, it may be said, does the law give that knowledge or conviction of sin? It does so in two ways:—By the application of its commandments and its prohibitions . . . for it excites and awakens the conscience, and gives birth to accusing thoughts. . . . By the declaration of punishments and rewards . . . thus bringing before the eyes of men the dreadful evil of sin."

From all this we see the impossibility of justification before God by any works of law which we can do. What can the law do for the transgressor?

"In vain we ask God's righteous law to justify us now,
Since to convince and to condemn is all the law can do."

"No hope can on the law be built of justifying grace;
The law which shows the sinner's guilt condemns him to his face."

Who, after knowing these things, will lean upon his own righteousness, or look to his own heart or life for acceptance with God?

III. The manifestation of the righteousness of God without law.

"*And now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the profets.*"

Here the apostle, from the statements of the law

and the guilt of man, turns to the gospel revelation of the righteousness of God.

In this first statement, observe what the righteousness is which is without law; how it is manifested; and how it is witnessed.

1. The righteousness of God, here spoken of, being without law, is a righteousness provided.

The fourfold manifestation of the term *righteousness of God* we have already opened up in discoursing on Rom. i. 16, 17. The righteousness here spoken of being *without law*, cannot be a righteousness which God requires, nor a righteousness which he executes, for these are with law. It must, therefore, be a righteousness which he has provided. This righteousness is here clearly distinguished from all other. Righteousness with law is righteousness by works. Righteousness without law is not a righteousness which trifles with the law; which is impossible; but it is a righteousness which becomes ours without works done by us. The law can declare none righteous but those who obey all its requirements, both in heart and in life. But here is a righteousness provided for the disobedient. It is a righteousness without law, being beyond the nature and power of law. It is a righteousness which the law could not provide, it being weak through man's transgression, through the sinfulness of the flesh, Rom. viii. 3; Gal. iii. 21.

2. This righteousness is manifested where it is revealed, namely, in the gospel.

It is manifested by God in setting forth his Son to

be a righteousness for the guilty. It is manifested in Christ, whose righteousness it is, for he is the end of the law in order to righteousness to every one who believeth. It is manifested in Christ's cross, in which the justice of God, that is, the righteousness which God has, laid the vengeance of our sins upon the righteous substitute in order to provide a righteousness for the guilty. This righteousness is manifested to the view of mankind that they might see it and receive it, and be made righteous in the sight of a holy and righteous God.

3. This righteousness, although without law, is witnessed by the law and the profets.

Out of the mouth of many witnesses this word is established. The law and the profets are the Scriptures of the Old Testament from Moses to Malachi. As from beginning to end these bear witness to the coming of Christ, they also witness to the provision of a righteousness in Christ in order to the justification and salvation of men. This righteousness is witnessed by the law in the first declaration of mercy and deliverance through the seed of the woman, and in the appointment of sacrifices for sin till the seed should come, the Lamb of God bearing the sin of the world. It is witnessed by the profets both in the predictions of the Messiah, and in the special intimations of a righteousness to be created and brought near by God for those who are far from righteousness. This is particularly seen in the writings of Isaiah. See, among others, chap. xlv. 22–25, xlvi. 12, 13, li. 4–8. Also

Jer. xxiii. 5, 6, where we learn that the name of the righteous branch and righteous king was to be "Jehovah is our righteousness," implying that the righteousness in Christ is righteousness from Jehovah himself. Thus, although it is a righteousness without law, it is not against law; the law being rather a witness to its manifestation, and all the profets witnessing to Jesus that through his name every one who believeth in him shall receive forgiveness of sins.

IV. The terms, freeness and blessings of the righteousness of God.

"The righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ is unto all and upon all who believe," &c.

We read verses 22–24 as one complete sentence, exhibiting these three things in the righteousness of God revealed in the gospel. Its terms—"through the faith of Jesus Christ;" its freeness—"unto all;" its enjoyment—"upon all who believe." The remainder of these verses we take to be the reason of the freeness and the blessing enjoyed. Thus, if we ask, Why is the righteousness of God unto all? answer, "For there is no difference." And why is there no difference? "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." And when it is said, "The righteousness of God is upon all who believe," we ask, What then? what is the blessing thus enjoyed in virtue of the righteousness being upon them? answer, "Being justified freely by his grace."

This outline we deem important, both because of

the interwoven style of the passage, and because of the beauty which is thus brought to view in the precious truths taught. Here notice six things in relation to this righteousness.

1. The means through which the righteousness of God becomes the property of any of the children of men.

1st, The preposition here rendered *by* is more properly *through*, as in ver. 30, implying means. The grand truth taught is that, while the righteousness of God is provided, it must be received; and as it is in Christ, it becomes ours only as we believe in him. Faith in Christ, therefore, is what is necessary on our part in order to obtain this righteousness.

2d, The words, "*faith of Jesus Christ*," may denote either the truth about Jesus, that is, the gospel, the faith once delivered to the saints; or they may denote belief in the truth, faith in Jesus. This latter we understand to be the meaning here, as it is clearly in ver. 26, where the Greek is the same, although differently rendered, "*believeth in Jesus*." "The righteousness of God through the faith of Jesus Christ," is clearly the righteousness which becomes ours through believing in Jesus.

3d, Jesus Christ, then, is the grand object of faith in order to our enjoyment of the righteousness of God in the gospel. The reason is plain, arising out of the very nature of things. The righteousness, being in Christ, can be ours only as we also are in him, and he in us; that is, as we are one with him. We can be one with Christ only as we receive him and his truth

into our hearts, putting our souls for salvation into his hands, and identifying ourselves with him and his kingdom. The call, then, to every soul seeking pardon, is, "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved;" for by this means the righteousness of God becomes yours.

2. The freeness of the righteousness of God.

1st, This is seen in the glorious announcement, "*unto all.*" Here truly we have good news, glad tidings of great joy. For sinners there is righteousness, the righteousness of God, righteousness through Christ. This righteousness is unto all, teaching us that it is free to all mankind; that it is for every child of Adam, rich and poor, young and old, virtuous and vicious, Jew and Gentile.

2d, This is one of those glorious gospel statements which stand out on the page of the New Testament, shining with the brightness of a sunbeam, intimating not only the willingness of God to save all men without distinction and without exception, but also the fact of provision being made to accomplish this end. None could be saved without a robe to cover his sins; but here is a robe for all; therefore, as far as the robe is concerned, there is a covering, and accordingly salvation for all. Here we have the same universality of provision as in John iii. 16; 2 Cor. v. 14, 15; 1 Tim. ii. 3–6, and other scriptures. When will good men give over limiting the grace of God? Friend, we rejoice we can say that, as there is righteousness for all, there is therefore righteousness for you.

3d, As far as the grammar is concerned, the qualifying clause, in the words, "*who believe,*" might be read twice. But while this would alter the expression, and present something like limitation, it would not alter the case of the gospel and the sinner. If we say, The righteousness is unto all who believe, this shuts out none, for none can get it without believing; and all who hear may believe. Or if we say, The righteousness is unto all, this can be no benefit to those who will not believe. Believing is demanded, whether stated or not. But the understood repetition of the words, "*who believe,*" would destroy the manifest distinction intended between all men and all believers, between the family of the first Adam, for whom the righteousness is provided, and the family of the second Adam, by whom it is enjoyed.

3. The enjoyment of the righteousness of God.

1st, Between the words, "*unto* all, and *upon* all," there is a marked distinction: the one implying those who are welcome to the righteousness, those for whom it is provided; the other, those who enjoy the righteousness, those who have it upon them. This is clear from the prepositions, εις, *unto, for*, and επι, *on, upon*; which leads us to conclude that the words should be distinctly read as in our version.

2d, While the righteousness of God is unto all, it is not upon all. It is unto all the race of Adam. It is upon all who believe. All are welcome to it; but in the very nature of things those only who believe enjoy it; it is theirs alone.

3d, The righteousness must be upon the sinner in order to benefit from it. A robe is not merely to be hung up or laid by in a wardrobe. It is made to be put on; and it must be put on, in order to answer the end, as a garment, either to keep warm or to adorn the body. As with our garments, so with the garments of salvation—so with the robe of righteousness. As with the wedding garment at the marriage feast, so with the righteousness provided by God in Christ, it must be upon you,—upon you in order to acceptance in the sight of God—in order to salvation from hell and sin —in order to meetness for God and glory.

4th, As it is upon all who believe, only believe in Jesus, and the righteousness is upon you. The moment you return from sin to God,—the moment you give up your own righteousness, your filthy rags,—the moment you receive Jesus as the Lord your righteousness,—that moment the word is, "Bring forth the best robe and put it on him." Then as Christ, who knew not sin, was in dying made sin for us, so we believing become the righteousness of God in him, 2 Cor. v. 21. As it is *unto* all men without exception, so it is *upon* all believers.

4. The reason of the freeness of the righteousness of God.

The connection of the words we read thus,—"*The righteousness of God is unto all; . . . . for there is no difference.*"

1st, This does not imply that there is no difference of any kind between one and another. It does not

imply that one man is not a greater sinner than another; or that one is not in greater danger than another. A fuller statement of the same words in chap. x. 12 may throw some light on the meaning. Having said, "Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed," Paul adds, "For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all who call upon him:" evidently implying that Jew and Gentile are on the same level in relation to the blessings of salvation—all men being alike welcome, in the riches and sovereignty of God's grace. They have only to believe and call upon God. So here there is no difference between one and another in relation to the righteousness of God in the gospel. There is no difference as to need—all need the righteousness. There is no difference as to worthiness—none deserves it. There is no difference as to sufficiency—there is enough for all. Jesus Christ gave himself a ransom for all, and his blood cleanseth from all sin. There is no difference as to welcome—for there is no respect of persons with God; for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. The premise, accordingly, is brought to the conclusion thus:—Because there is no difference between one and another, therefore the righteousness of God is unto all. If the righteousness were not unto all, there would be a difference, although Paul says there is none. This is farther clear when we observe that the righteousness is not upon all, but upon those who believe; for in this case there is a difference—the difference of belief and unbelief.

5. The reason why there is no difference between one and another in relation to the righteousness of God. "*There is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.*"

1st, The fact that all have sinned has already been set forth in the statements made from ver. 9–19, "Both Jews and Gentiles—all under sin." "There is none righteous, no, not one." "All the world guilty before God."

2d, Accordingly, all have come short of the glory of God. Sin and the glory of God are directly opposed. Those, therefore, who come before in the former, come behind in the latter. This is seen in the nature of things. As the term "*glory of God*" has three meanings, there are two senses in which these words are fulfilled. The glory of God is sometimes the glory which he has in himself; sometimes the glory which is his due from the creature; and sometimes the glory which he gives to those who glorify him. Sin cannot affect God's own glory. But those who sin fail to render the glory which is his due; for they dishonour him in disobeying and transgressing his holy will. And they fail to receive from him that glory which is the portion of those who love and obey him. Sin robs both God and the sinner of glory. It fails to give glory to God; and instead of glory, it entails upon the sinner indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man who doeth evil, chap. ii. 6–11.

3d, All having sinned and come short of the glory of God, there is no difference, therefore, in relation to the

righteousness of God. If there were one righteous, there would be one who did not need the righteousness of another; and, therefore, a righteousness would not have been provided for him. But seeing there is none righteous, no not one, mark the love, mark the impartiality of God. Here is a righteousness which is unto all. The remedy is as wide as the disease. The righteousness of God is as extensive as the unrighteousness of man. Let every one observe that there are two *alls* here—the all of sin, and the all of the righteousness of God. Who will say the one is limited and the other unlimited? How many have sinned? *All.* Unto how many is the righteousness of God? *Unto all.* Could words be plainer? Again we say, When will good men give over limiting the unlimited grace—the unto-all righteousness of God? Those who hold that all have sinned, and no difference, must also hold that the righteousness of God is unto all, and no difference.

6. The blessed condition of all who believe in having the righteousness of God upon them.

The connection we read thus,—"*The righteousness of God is upon all who believe, . . being justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.*"

Let us notice carefully the glorious truths contained in these precious words—words of peace and salvation.

1st, As all who believe have the righteousness of God upon them, all who have the righteousness upon them are accordingly justified. What it is to be justified in the sight of God we have already seen in our

meditations on ver. 20. The great truth here taught is the justification of all who have God's righteousness upon them. For this end the righteousness was provided, and accordingly the end is accomplished the moment it is received. Those who have the righteousness on them have the wedding garment upon them; and consequently, when the King views the believing guests, they are accepted in the beloved. Being in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation to them; they stand righteous before God, and, as such, they enjoy his smile. Rom. viii. 1.

2d, They are justified freely—that is, gratuitously, for nothing. The word here rendered *freely* denotes literally, as a gift. This implies that those who believe in Jesus give nothing, and need to give nothing, for the robe of righteousness which is put on them. Those who believe take what God gives, but they do not give. God is the giver as he is the provider, and man is the receiver. What God gives he gives for nothing—even this righteousness as his other bounties. Friend, take the righteousness of God, and you are justified. Take it as it is given, for nothing. Who ever charges for a gift? Who ever pays for a gift? Pride will talk of payment, but it is a slight—not to say, an insult—to the giver. The great truth here taught is more largely set forth by Paul himself in the next chapter. "Now to him who worketh the reward is reckoned not as grace, but as debt. But to him who worketh not, but believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned unto righteousness." With this accords the

glorious gospel call, "Ho, every one who thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy wine and milk, without money, and without price." So also that other, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come and take of the water of life freely,"—as a gift,—for nothing. Thus all who believe have the righteousness of God upon them, being justified freely.

3d, They are justified by the grace of God. Intimating that the justification being for nothing done by them, is a favour, an unmerited favour. The favour or grace of God is his kindly disposition towards men notwithstanding their sin. This grace is the spring of salvation and all its blessings, and therefore of justification, Efes. ii. 8. Saved by grace, therefore chosen, adopted, justified, and sanctified, by grace. "And if by grace, then it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace," Rom. xi. 6.

4th, They are justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.

(1.) Here we observe that those who are justified for nothing on their own part, are not justified for nothing on God's part; that while they are not justified by any works done by them, a great work had to be done in order to render their justification possible to the justice of God. This work is here called "the redemption which is in Christ Jesus," the means through which believers are justified, the channel through which this best of blessings flows to the children of men.

(2.) Redemption properly is deliverance by purchase, the end accomplished through the means employed,

the price paid. The end is here put for the means, the ransoming for the ransom. The redemption which is in Christ Jesus is the deliverance which he has wrought from sin and its woes, by the ransom which he has paid in laying down his life, an atonement for the sin of man, a satisfaction to the justice of God. Without this ransom there could have been no ransoming. Without the redemption price there could have been no redemption work. Without the death of the Son of God there could have been no life for the sons of men. But here is the good news in this unfolding of the gospel roll, that whatever was necessary, whatever the righteousness of God demanded, in order to the justification and salvation of men, has been accomplished in the obedience and death of the Lord Jesus Christ as their surety. All this was provided by grace, the favour of God; all this is given for nothing. Therefore, those who believe have the righteousness of God upon them, and accordingly are justified through means of the deliverance wrought, the ransom paid by the Son of God.

Let all remember that as the condition of those is blessed who have the righteousness of God upon them, wretched is the condition of those who neglect this righteousness and do not submit to it. While the former are justified, the latter are condemned. Their doom is written in the portion of the man who was found among the guests not having on the wedding garment. Let all remember that as justification is free, and therefore all are welcome, those gospel hearers

have no excuse who live and die condemned. Does any one ask, what he must do in order to be justified? The answer is to be found in what God has done and required. This is the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and the sinner's faith and trust.

V. The design of God in redemption through Christ as a propitiation.

"*Whom God hath set forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, unto a declaration of his righteousness, because of passing by, in the forbearance of God, past sins.*"

In these two verses, 25 and 26, we have the full statement of this design. In one sentence, it may be stated to be, a declaration of the righteousness of God; and this as seen in two things—namely, his forbearance with past sins, and his justice in justifying those who believe in Jesus.

More fully, we observe two leading thoughts—namely, the fact stated, and the design in view.

1. The fact stated contains the very soul of the gospel, —namely, Christ set forth by God as a propitiation.

In this we see that while the justifying righteousness of God is for nothing to man, it is not for nothing to God. It cost him the sacrifice of his Son, whom he spared not, but gave him up for us all. Here we observe what a propitiation is, how Jesus Christ is thus set forth, and how his propitiation becomes available to men.

1st. What a propitiation is.

The word *propitiation*, from the Latin *propitius*,

favourable, denotes literally a means of propitiousness, an honourable and righteous arrangement, on the ground of which one whose will has been transgressed can show favour and grant forgiveness to the transgressor. The Greek word ἱλαστηριον, here rendered *propitiation,* is found in one other New Testament scripture, Heb. ix. 5, where it is rendered *mercy-seat,*—a name evidently given to the golden lid of the ark of the covenant containing the two stone tables of the law. The Hebrew word is literally *a covering,* and therefore appropriate to the lid of the ark, as in Exod. xxv. 17–22; and always rendered *mercy-seat.* The Greek word is literally and properly *a medium of mercy;* that is, a means by which mercy can with honour to justice reach the guilty. This the mercy-seat became to Israel, when once a year it was sprinkled with blood, Lev. xvi. 11–19. A propitiation, then, is a means of propitiousness, a medium of mercy, a covering for sin, an expiative, a satisfaction for wrong done, by means of which the wrong-doer may be restored to the favour and friendship of the lawgiver and ruler. In one word, propitiation is atonement.

2d. How Jesus Christ is set forth as a propitiation.

(1.) God set him forth. This is our confidence and joy in the good news of the gospel, that what Christ became and accomplished on behalf of man, was by the decree and the doing of Jehovah, the everlasting God. He set him forth to be a propitiation in purpose and profecy, in the sacrifices and figures of the old dispensation, and in his life and death and intercession. In

all these we see God teaching one grand lesson, and accomplishing one grand work—satisfaction to justice in order to the manifestation of mercy.

(2.) Jesus Christ is a propitiation in his being a medium of the mercy of God to the children of men through his blood. As under the law, in order to propitiation there was both a victim whose blood had to be shed, and a mercy-seat on which its blood had to be sprinkled, so Jesus takes the place of both. He is both the propitiating sacrifice whose blood has been shed in order to the forgiveness of our sins, and also the mercy-seat, covering by his atonement and intercession the sins of all who come to God through him. Hence in Scripture he is called both ἱλασμος, the victim of propitiation, and ἱλαστηριον, the medium of propitiation. The former, twice in John's first epistle, chap. ii. 2, iv. 10. The latter, in the scripture under review. In all this we see that while God had pity towards sinful men, yet, as they had broken his holy law, mercy could reach the sinner only through a means of satisfaction to justice. This Christ having accomplished in his substitutionary death, and justice being satisfied, as seen in his resurrection, and he having entered the holy of holies through his own blood, mercy can now flow forth freely to pardon and save the guilty children of men. Thus God hath set forth his Son a propitiation, both in his death on the cross, and his intercession within the vail.

3d. The means needful on the part of men in order to benefit from the propitiation of Christ.

The apostle says, "through faith in his blood." Here we see, that as Jesus Christ could not be a propitiation but through his blood, so the propitiation can avail nothing to sinners without faith in the blood. While Christ's blood has been shed and justice satisfied, mercy unto pardon can reach us only as we have faith in the blood. It is clear that God can be propitious to those only who receive the propitiation; that he can have mercy on those only who come to him through the medium of mercy; that he can wash from their sins those only who come to the fountain which cleanseth from sin and uncleanness. Hence the absolute necessity of faith in the blood of Christ. There is virtue in the blood to take away sin, as there is virtue in water to take away defilement. But as men have faith in the water, and therefore apply to it for cleansing, knowing that otherwise its virtue would be unavailing, so must every soul have faith in the blood of Christ, and apply to it in order to cleansing from sin. The arrangement of faith in order to a spiritual benefit arises out of the very nature of things. That benefit cannot otherwise be reached. Faith takes the boon and appropriates it. It takes the blessing of the giver, and appropriates it to the receiver. Thus, believing in Christ, we make him ours. Believing in him as God's appointed propitiation, God is propitious to us. Believing in his blood shed in order to a propitiation, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our sins.

Come then, O sinner, to the fountain filled with

blood drawn from Emmanuel's veins. Believe in this blood shed by the righteous and gracious appointment of a holy and merciful God. Believe in this blood shed for sin, for your sins, and therefore for you. Never forget that the propitiation, being through blood, can do you good only as you have faith in the blood.

2. A twofold manifestation of God's righteousness is his great design in setting forth Christ as a propitiation.

Here are three important inquiries—namely, the righteousness of God here spoken of, its twofold manifestation here designed, and the accomplishment of this design seen in Christ being a propitiation for sin.

1st. The righteousness of God here spoken of.

(1.) We have already seen that the righteousness of God is fourfold,—namely, the righteousness which he has, which he requires, which he executes, and which he has provided. We have already seen that the righteousness specially revealed in the gospel, being a righteousness without law and by faith, is a righteousness provided, and therefore to be received. This is the righteousness of Christ; in the words before us, it is Christ set forth a propitiation. But from these words we learn farther, that this was accomplished εις ενδειξιν, *in order to a declaration* or manifestation of the righteousness of God. In other words, the righteousness which God has provided has been set forth in order to a manifestation of the righteousness which he has—that is, his justice. The righteousness of God

here spoken of, then, is the righteousness of his nature, his justice, in virtue of which he can do nothing wrong.

(2.) We generally consider the mercy of God as seen in the propitiation of Christ. And so it is. But here the apostle teaches us that the justice of God is seen in this propitiation; the righteousness which God has, in the righteousness which he has provided; the righteousness of his nature, in the righteousness wrought in and by his Son. We understand what it is to see the righteousness or justice of God in his laws, and in his judgments; here we see it in his gospel. And as God set forth his laws and his judgments in order to a manifestation of his righteousness, so hath he set forth his Son a propitiation, in order to the same end.

2d. The manifestation of God's righteousness or justice in the propitiation of Christ.

Mark the two wonders here presented to view—justice in forbearance, and justice in justification; or rather there are four wonders—God passing by sins in his forbearance, his justification of believers in Jesus, and his justice manifested in it all, and the propitiation of Christ in order to a manifestation of this justice.

(1.) God, righteous while in his forbearance, passing by sins which are past.

The words of the apostle setting forth this great truth require a little clearing up, both in translation and exposition.

(1st.) The preposition διὰ, here rendered *for*, having

the accusative, is more properly *because of, on account of*—the same idea and use in chap. iv. 25. And yet, perhaps, the words *in* or *through* would more simply and clearly express the meaning.

(2d.) The noun παρεσις, here rendered *remission*, is found nowhere else in the New Testament. It means not forgiving, but *passing by*. The word αφεσις, denoting *remission, forgiveness*, although from the same root, conveys quite another idea.*

(1. There is a great difference between passing by sin and forgiving sin. All forgiveness includes passing by sin; but all passing by does not include forgiveness. The distinction is expressed in the beautiful words of Micah vii. 18, where both terms are found. When a sin is passed by, it may be because justice delays to punish, while one day punishment may come. But when a sin is forgiven it is more than passed by, it is directly met, and blotted out, never to be punished.

(2. The meaning here we believe to be not *remission*, but *passing by;* not αφεσις, *sending the sin away*, but παρεσις, *letting it pass for a time*. We adopt, therefore, without hesitation, the marginal rendering, *passing over*. (1.) This distinct idea is borne out by its connection with the forbearance of God. All forgiveness is in forbearance, but all forbearance does not insure forgiveness; it leads to delay of punishment, hoping for repentance. Thus God hath forborne with the sins of men age after age, from the very first until now,—not punishing, nor yet pardoning, but

* See Trench's New Testament Synonyms.

suffering long, passing them over for a time. Thus with the antediluvians; thus with Israel again and again; thus with the benighted and besotted nations of the earth; thus with all the ungodly; thus even with those who ere long become believers in Jesus. Now in all these we see forbearance passing by, passing over sin, but not forgiving. (2.) That the distinctive idea is passing by, and not pardon, is farther apparent from the second manifestation of God's righteousness, here seen in the justification of those who believe in Jesus. Where otherwise is the difference?

(3d.) The sins which God in his forbearance passes by are here said to be sins which are past. The question arises, To what past sins does the apostle refer? Is it the sins of the ages before the coming of Christ to die for sin? Or is it the sins of believers before the hour of conversion to God? Is it the sins which were past before the atonement was made? or the sins which were past before faith in the atonement? Doddridge, Haldane, and Chalmers, are of the former opinion.

(1. The word rendered *past* does not determine which of these is the apostle's meaning. Both, we know, are facts—great truths set forth in God's arrangement, and seen in relation to the propitiation of Christ. As to sins which were past before the coming of Christ, we may be assured that had it not been with a view to the atonement which was to be made in the fulness of time, God would not have passed one of them by. Yea, we have reason to believe that literal and eternal death

would immediately have followed the sin of our first parents. But that sin, whether forgiven or not, was passed by in the forbearance of God. And why, but because of the propitiation which God set forth in the promised seed of the woman, by the bruising of whose heel the serpent's head was to be bruised, and thus an atonement made for sin? In like manner, as to the sins of believers which are past before faith in the atonement, these also are passed by in the forbearance of God. In both cases sin was not punished nor pardoned, but passed by.

(2. Upon a survey of the whole, I am inclined to think that the distinct allusion is to God's forbearance with the sins of men, both Jews and Gentiles, both believers and unbelievers, before the death of Christ, and because of his purpose to give up Christ to die for sin. Because God had this end to accomplish in the Jews, he said, "As the new wine is found in the cluster, and it is said, Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it; so will I do for my servants' sake, that I may not destroy them all. And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob," &c. And again he says, "I, Jehovah, change not; therefore, ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Having also great purposes to accomplish in giving the Gentiles to his Son, we read of the ages before Christ; —"The times of this ignorance God looked over." Isa. lxv. 8, 9; Mal. iii. 6; Acts xvii. 30. Thus he passed by in his forbearance, without either pardoning or punishing to the full the sins which were past before Christ came. See also 2 Pet. iii. 8, 9.

(3. All this brings out the meaning and force of the words διαπαρεσιν—"on account of passing by"—and also their connection. It is not "righteousness because of passing by sins," but "ενδειξις—a declaration of righteousness," showing the reason of sins being passed by. The righteousness is seen not in passing by sin, but in the atonement. This, therefore, is one great end accomplished in setting forth Christ a propitiation. God's righteousness is shown forth notwithstanding his passing by sins.

(4th.) The forbearance of God, but not his righteousness, seen in thus passing by past sins.

(1. When the apostle asks, Is God, who taketh vengeance, unrighteous? we may also ask, Is God unrighteous in passing by sins? The answer, gathered from our text, is that God's righteousness in so doing was not yet shown forth, but that it would be in fulness of time, when his Son would be set forth a propitiation in order to this end. This great truth is seen both in the pardon of the sins of the righteous, and also in the passing by of the sins of the wicked, before Christ. The former of these ideas is well stated by Maclean in a note on Heb. ix. 15.

(2. Justice might have hurled thunderbolts of vengeance at the sinner in the moment of his sin, but, because of mercy, justice refrained for a time, standing silently by. The truth is, neither justice nor injustice was seen in passing by sin. Justice was holding back, because one day an atonement was to be made. Sin was allowed to go on, and the sinner was not instantly

cut down, as in the justice of God he might have been. In that case there would, and there could, have been no atonement. And even if there had, it would have been of no avail either to God or to man. Hence the propitiation of Christ necessarily presupposes the temporary passing by of sin. Was God then unjust in passing by sin? Had there been no atonement, there had been no answer to this inquiry. But when the cross of Christ was reared, then God was seen to be just, as well as long-suffering and forbearing.

(2.) God righteous in justifying those who believe in Jesus.

This the apostle presents as a second design of God in the propitiation of Christ. Hence he repeats the words, "προς ενδειξιν, *with a view to a manifestation* of his righteousness,"—that is, as we have already seen, his justice; for he adds, "that he might be just, and justifying him who is of the faith of Jesus."

The words, εν τω νυν καιρω, "*at the time which now is*," demand attention, as seemingly in contrast with the *past* of the former statement. They afford also farther confirmation of the idea that "the sins which are *past*" relate to the time before that "which *now* is," —that is, before the Christian age.

In endeavouring to open up the glorious truth presented in these words, we observe the following things:—

(1st.) God being just, the question arises, How can he do anything that he might be just? The answer is seen in this, that, although he is just, he might do something which may seem contrary to justice—as, for

example, passing by sin; and, still more, justifying sinners. As he has a regard to his great name, he will therefore see to it that his justice shall appear. Hence we have here a manifestation, a showing forth, of his righteousness or justice.

(2d.) As we have seen that God was just even while passing by sins, so also we see him just even in justifying sinners.

(1. Whom God justifies we are here plainly told—"Him who is of the faith of Jesus,"—that is, the sinner who believes in Jesus, as we have seen in our remarks on ver. 22. In chap. iv. 5, we read that God "justifies the ungodly,"—that is, those who have been, but not those who continue, ungodly. All men are ungodly and condemned till they believe in Jesus. Those whom God justifies, therefore, are the ungodly who believe; upon which in the same hour they cease to be condemned and to be ungodly. They are now believers in Jesus—therefore justified; therefore righteous and godly. In this we have the glorious, the precious truth that justification before God becomes ours, not by works of righteousness which we have done, or may do, but by believing in Jesus, trusting our souls to his righteousness, chap. iv. 4, 5.

(2. How God is just in justifying those who believe in Jesus. In other words, how the righteousness of God is shown forth in the justification of believers. The question is, How can a judge be just and justify one found guilty of the crime with which he is charged? One thing is sure—justice can never justify, nor even

let go, the guilty. But some arrangement might be made by mercy in perfect harmony with justice, by which the prisoner might be acquitted; not declared innocent—which is impossible with God—but let go as if he were innocent. And such are the glad tidings of the gospel. An arrangement has been made in perfect harmony with the justice of God, by which the law is honoured, and, at the same time, sinners acquitted. This arrangement is setting forth Christ to be a propitiation through his blood, and making the propitiation available through faith in the blood. From this we learn, that God could not be just in justifying sinners without a propitiation, nor even with a propitiation, without faith in it.

Here, then, two things demand careful attention in order to understand God's plan of saving men from condemnation.

(1.) The necessity of a propitiation for sin in order that God might be just in justifying sinners. According to the demands of justice, sin must be punished. As sin is wandering from God, the spring of life, the punishment—in other words, the necessary result—of sin must be death. That sin bring death upon the sinner, is therefore the demand of justice in the very nature of things. That the sinner live, notwithstanding his sins, is the desire of mercy. Here, then, was the difficulty—how justice and mercy could meet in the sinner; how sin could be visited with death, and at the same time the sinner restored to life. How, then, can God be just in punishing sin, and at the same time

merciful and just in acquitting the sinner? The answer is, by a propitiation; by one who has no sin taking the place of sinners and dying for their sins. This is the very thing which Christ, the Son of God, has done. This is the good news proclaimed in the gospel. Death has been endured by Christ that life may be restored to sinful men. Christ's endurance of death is the propitiation, the pacification, the satisfaction of justice, the medium of mercy, the covering of sin, the way of escape to the sinner. This propitiation being set forth, the righteousness of God is shown forth; the demands of justice being answered, God can be just, and at the same time acquit the guilty.

(2.) The necessity of faith in the propitiation in order that God might be just in justifying sinners. It will be remarked that faith in Jesus is plainly stated in the scripture before us in connection with justice and justification. We have already seen that, as far as means is concerned, faith is indispensable; for as the propitiation is through blood, it can be of no avail without faith in the blood. But this is not all. Justice as much demands faith as the propitiation. It as much demands the faith of the sinner as death for sin. It necessarily demands not only that satisfaction be made, but also that all parties be satisfied. The judge may be satisfied with the terms of mercy; but if the prisoner, being guilty, do not acquiesce, or do not care, he cannot with justice be acquitted. If subjects unrighteously rebel, the king himself may offer terms of mercy in perfect keeping with justice; but if the

rebels refuse acquiescence, justice cannot acquit them. In the case of mankind, God is satisfied, for he himself in his love hath set forth his own Son the propitiation. Reason itself teaches us that justice cannot acquit those sinners who refuse or neglect the propitiation. While, therefore, the righteousness of God demanded, and the goodness of God provided, a righteousness, it as much demands faith in order to be clothed with the righteousness. Hence it is that in the gospel, faith in Jesus is reckoned unto righteousness, and, therefore, indispensable to the justification of justice in the acquittal of the guilty.

Thus we see that God is just in not justifying sinners without a propitiation, or even with a propitiation without faith in it. And thus we see the righteousness or justice of God in setting forth Christ a propitiation satisfactory to justice, and in demanding faith in order to justification, and in justifying those who have faith in Jesus the propitiation.

VI. Self-boasting shut out, and the law of God established through faith in Christ.

"Where is boasting, then? Shut out. By what law? Of works? No; but by the law of faith," &c.

Here the apostle brings his great argument to a close with a pointed exhibition of the practical results of the glorious arrangement of the righteousness of God in the gospel. Four great results in particular he names: boasting shut out; justification by faith established; God seen to be alike the God of Jews

and of Gentiles who believe; and, lastly, the law not made void, but established through faith.

1. Boasting, that is, self-boasting, shut out.

The gospel leaves not an inch of room for any notion of the merits of the creature. It teaches us that, as there is none righteous, no, not one,—in us, that is, in our flesh, dwelleth no good thing. For if even our righteousnesses be as filthy rags, what must our unrighteousnesses be? In this very lesson of humiliation the gospel is its own witness to its origin from God. The law of faith and not of works shuts out boasting. This law being the plan of salvation by believing in the righteousness of another, leads us to boast in him in whose righteousness we are accepted; and as the merit is undivided, all self-boasting is excluded.

2. Justification by faith without works of law established.

This statement, beginning with *therefore*, is a deduction from premises already laid down. The apostle had already showed that men are not justified before God by works of law, ver. 20; that the righteousness of God, being by faith in Jesus Christ, is upon all who believe, ver. 22; and that, accordingly, all who believe are justified after the way of a gift by God's grace through Christ's redemption, ver. 24; and that, because of Christ's propitiation, God is just in justifying those who believe in Jesus, ver. 26. Nothing, therefore, can be more clear than this, that works of law have no part in the justification of sinners; that justification

before God is entirely through Christ, and nothing in us—through faith in Christ, and not through any works of ours. Some draw a distinction between works of law and works of gospel. This we deem an upsetting of the Gospel plan of justification, and, therefore, dangerous to souls. The place of works can never be before, but after, justification. Works are not the means, but the evidence. In a tree there are not many roots, but one; there is not one branch, or fruit, but many. Faith is the root, works are the branches and fruits of faith. The means of justification is faith in Christ without works of any kind. The evidences are works of faith and obedience. The two are inseparable. And such is the teaching of both Paul and James, of enlightened reason and God-breathed revelation.

3. Justification being by faith according to God's arrangement, it follows that he is the God of all who believe, whether Jews or Gentiles.

This teaches that he is no longer the God of Jews, and that he cannot be the God of unbelievers. He is the God,—the object of fear and love, of worship and obedience, the shield and reward,—of those only who believe in him, and therefore believe in his Son Jesus Christ.

4. The law not made void, but established through faith.

This intimates that some might be ready to make a bad use of the glorious doctrine of justification through believing in the righteousness of another, as if it would

lead to a neglect of personal righteousness. No, says Paul; but the very reverse. This is evident from three considerations:

1st, As both the law and the gospel are of God, the one can never make void the other. Rather the one must honour and magnify the other.

2d, As in Christ the ceremonial law was all accomplished, and by him the moral law was spotlessly fulfilled, the law is not made void, but established. In nothing is the law of God more honoured than in the atonement of the Son of God for the sins of men.

3d, As faith in the gospel is the root of holiness and obedience in men, by faith therefore the law is best fulfilled and most firmly established. Faith in God and in Christ works by love, purifies the heart, and overcomes the world. And love and pureness of heart are the fulfilling of the law. On earth there is not a holy man but the believer in Jesus. The righteousness of the law is fulfilled in those only who have the righteousness of the gospel. Righteous works have their root in the righteousness of faith.

CHAPTER XI.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF RECONCILIATION TO GOD THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.

"And all the things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; how that God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them; and hath put in us the word of reconciliation," &c.—2 Cor. v. 18–21.

In this precious scripture we have what we reckon the seventh unfolding of the Gospel roll. The leading idea of the good news here is reconciliation—reconciliation to God, restoration to the friendship of our Maker. The very thought must be joy to every right mind. Where is the creature with a sound heart who can be happy estranged from his Creator? Where is the man who can have any pleasure lying under the frown of the Allmighty?

In meditation on these words, we notice five things —namely, God the origin of all things in the new creation, and therefore of the reconciliation of men to himself; the reconciliation of mankind the design of God in the work of Christ; reconciliation the burden of a Gospel ministry; the foundation for this reconciliation laid broad and deep in the fact of our sins

being laid upon Christ, in order that God's righteousness in Christ might be reckoned to us.

I. God the origin of all things in the new creation.

"*And all the things are from God.*" All things in the widest sense of the words are not from God, because he is not the author of sin. All things in nature are from God, because he is the great first cause. But even this we do not take to be the meaning here. In the former verse the apostle tells us what the all things are; not all things of the old creation in Adam, but all things of the new creation in Christ; of which he says, "Old things have gone away; behold, all things have become new." In this new creation, the new things are a new heart, a new spirit, a new life, a new man. And here he shows that the same God who is the first cause of the old creation, the maker and mover, upholder and preserver of all things in the natural world, is the first cause of the new creation—the maker and mover, upholder and preserver of all things in the regeneration and salvation of man.

II. God the author of the reconciliation of believers in Christ to himself.

"*Who hath reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ.*"

Here notice what reconciliation is; the reconciler; the reconciled; and the medium of the reconciliation.

1. What reconciliation is.

The English word *reconciliation*, derived from the Latin, denotes literally *calling together again, knitting* and *joining together again*, and then *making friends again*. Hence also *conciliation*. Thus it implies a friendly meeting of those who from friends had become foes, and after being a while estranged had agreed to lay aside their differences—to meet as friends, and live henceforth at peace. The Greek word denotes literally *exchange—giving one thing for another*—and, therefore, the condition of restored friendship by exchange of terms on which both parties agree. The reconciliation of sinners to God is a change and an exchange,—a change from foeship to friendship, from war to peace, and that by an exchange of conditions. God having given his Son as a propitiation for sin, the sinner who receives him as the gift of God's free grace is received into the friendship and favour of God. Thus those who were sometime estranged, and foes in their minds by wicked works, are reconciled to God, becoming friends by faith in his Son.

2. God, and not man, is the reconciler; and man, not God, the reconciled.

Many good men, in preaching, in hymns, and in systems of theology, speak of God as being reconciled to man. Their meaning doubtless is true, that God is favourable, loving, merciful, and gracious towards the race; and that he has shown this in not sparing his Son, and in freely forgiving and saving all who believe in him. But none of these implies any change in God, which the participle

reconciled, being passive, does. Nothing has ever changed God's mind towards man. Man is the reconciled, but not God. In Scripture we never find the term, "*God reconciled,*" but "*God reconciling,*" as twice in the words under review. No one brings God into friendship with man, or changes his wrath to favour, his frowns to smiles. It is God by Christ who brings man into friendship with himself; who slays the enmity, and makes it possible for sinful rebels to become children and friends. The plan and the accomplishment of the work are all his own.

3. Believers in Jesus, and believers only, are reconciled to God.

In the scripture before us, Paul says of himself and those to whom he writes, "He hath reconciled *us.*" While provision has been made for the reconciliation of all mankind to God, and while all are welcome to the blessing, yet none enjoys it but those who receive the provision made, and who take the welcome given. Those who love sin love rebellion, and therefore continue in arms against their Maker, and thus are not reconciled. Those who are asleep in their sins, having no concern about the greatness of their guilt, and the dreadfulness of their danger, and therefore no regard for Christ, are not reconciled. In short, all who have not believed the witness of God concerning his Son, all who have not come to Jesus in order to salvation, are yet unreconciled. On the other hand, every believer in the Lord Jesus Christ is immediately forgiven all his sins, and received into the friendship and favour

of God. Believing in Jesus, we are justified; and "being justified by faith, we have peace with God." Every gospel blessing turns upon faith in the Son of God. Who will not believe, that he may enter into the enjoyment of so great a joy as the friendship and favour of the Lord God Allmighty?

4. The Lord Jesus is the only medium or mediator of reconciliation.

In order to reconciliation between God and man, it was necessary that there should be a plan alike honourable to God and sure to man. Justice necessarily demanded satisfaction for sin before the sinner could be restored to the favour of God, whose laws he had broken. As from the nature of sin no satisfaction could be made without death, it followed that either the reconciliation of the sinner was impossible, or some one must die for him. Hence the necessity of a mediator who should do whatever justice required in order to reconciliation. Hence the mediation of the Lord Jesus Christ, in which we find him dying for the sins of men, thereby making atonement to God and intercession for the transgressors. Thus it is that God reconciles sinners to himself, "through Jesus Christ." Thus it is that sinners are reconciled to God "through the death of his Son." Thus it is that Christ reconciles us to God "through his cross." Rom. v. 10; Efes. ii. 16; Col. i. 20–22.

Here we see why faith in Christ and his cross is necessary to our reconciliation. God having provided a mediator, it is for the sinner to receive him. The

mediator having died the accursed death of the cross, and thereby satisfied justice, and magnified and honoured the law, it is for us to rely on his death as the foundation of our hope towards God. Thus, and thus alone, can God and the sinner be at one; thus, and thus alone, can God be propitious to rebellious man; thus, and thus alone, can men be reconciled to God. Who seeing this will yet remain an enemy to God in the rejection of Christ?

III. THE RECONCILIATION OF MANKIND TO HIMSELF THE GRAND DESIGN OF GOD IN THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST.

"God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not reckoning their trespasses to them."

Here notice what is meant by God being in Christ; the work which God in Christ was accomplishing; the blessing which in this work is conveyed to the children of men.

1. What is meant by God being in Christ?

By this we understand the union of the Father and the Son in the work of man's redemption; the Father being the author, and the Son the agent of the work. The Father was the first cause; the thought, the counsel, the purpose, and the plan were all his own. The Son was the messenger and the servant of his Father, accomplishing the mission on which he was sent, doing the work which his Father gave him to do. Hence says Jesus, "The Son can do nothing from himself, but what he seeth the Father do." Again, "I

came down from heaven, not that I might do my own will, but the will of him who sent me." And again, "When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and do nothing from myself; but even as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things." And, as explanatory of God being in Christ, he adds, "And he who sent me is with me. The Father hath not left me alone, because I do always the things which are pleasing to him." But the fullest and clearest view of this great truth is his word to one of his disciples, "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words which I speak to you I speak not from myself; but the Father who abideth in me, he doeth the works." Thus, we understand, God was in Christ, speaking and working in him and by him, in his doctrines and miracles, in his sufferings and death, in his resurrection and ascension. John v. 19; vi. 38; viii. 28, 29; xiv. 7–11.

2. The work of God in Christ reconciling the world to himself.

1st, The word *world* here we take to be used in the same sense as in the words, "God so loved the world." As there, so here the world is only another term for the inhabitants, the human race, the family of man. It cannot be the church, for the church is never called the world, nor the world the church. Moreover, the word *reconciling* presents farther evidence. In the former verse we have the past tense of the verb, where the present would not apply, because believers are already reconciled, and can say, "He hath reconciled

us." In this verse we have the present tense, where the past would not apply, because unbelievers, the world lying in wickedness, are not reconciled. We never speak of reconciling friends, but foes. Accordingly, the work here accomplished by God in Christ is open to, and available for, every child of Adam.

2d, As to the work, it may be asked, How was God reconciling the world, seeing that the world was not, and is not yet reconciled? Answer—The term expressive of the end in view is here used to express the means by which the end is gained. The same we have already seen in the words *save* and *bought* in 1 Tim. i. 15, and Gal. iii. 13. Just as when we read, "Christ came into the world to save sinners;" that is, to do whatever was necessary to save; and "Christ hath bought us off from the curse of the law," that is, hath paid the price in order to our redemption: so here, when we read, "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself;" that is, providing an atonement in order to reconciliation; accomplishing all that was necessary on his part to remove the enmity and the estrangement of man, and to bring the race back to himself, to his friendship and favour. Such is the friendliness and love of God towards the family of man.

3. The blessing which God in the reconciling work of Christ was providing for the children of men, "*not reckoning trespasses.*" It is for us to consider what is implied and intended in this good news.

1st, Not to reckon their trespasses to them is, not to

lay their sins to their charge; that is, to cover them, to send them away, to forgive them, and therefore not to punish for them. See Rom. iv. 6–8.

2d, How does God not reckon to the world their trespasses, seeing that so many millions have been and are yet unpardoned? Answer—This does not imply that the world is pardoned any more than reconciled. It implies, that as God was in Christ doing all that was needful for reconciliation, so was he doing all that was needful to pardon. Therefore, as now the door is open to the reconciliation of all, so is the door open to the forgiveness of all. God was in Christ opening the door of friendship, and a fountain for sin and uncleanness. And now the gospel tidings are that both the fountain and the door are opened to all, and all are welcome.

3d, The connection between the two blessings is in the very nature of things inseparable, so that the one is impossible without the other. As men have sinned, they could not be reconciled to God and yet unpardoned. As in sin men are defiled and polluted, they could not become the friends of God, and yet uncleansed. In the very nature of the case, the pardon and the cleansing must go first. The great work, therefore, which had to be done in order to reconciliation, required to be a work providing also for pardon. As this could not be without a sacrifice rendering satisfaction to the justice of God for the sins of men, and therefore without the death of Christ, hence God was in Christ, both providing for the reconciliation of man-

kind to himself, and also for the pardon of their sins. Thus we see the work of God in Christ to be glorious in its adaptations and its completeness. Thus every one may see that in the gospel, ample provision is made for the forgiveness of every sin, and for the reconciliation to God of every sinner. The fountain is at the door, the fountain of cleansing at the door of friendship. The sinner must first wash in the fountain and be clean and pardoned, before he can enter the door and be reconciled and at peace with God. Let men and women only believe, and these and all other gospel blessings are theirs.

IV. Reconciliation to God the Burden of a Gospel Ministry.

In the scripture before us the apostle three times, and in three ways, sets this forth. "*God hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation, and hath put in us the word of reconciliation: Therefore we are ambassadors for Christ, as if God were beseeching through us, we pray for Christ, Be ye reconciled to God.*"

Observe—the ministry; the word; the ambassadorship of those engaged in this ministry; and the call of God by those who have this word.

1. The ministry of reconciliation.

1st, It is a ministry, and therefore a service; a service to be done for God and for men. Hence the apostles gloried in being the servants of God and of Christ, and of the churches, for Christ's sake. Hence idlers were never intended to become preachers, nor

preachers idlers. Hence the ministers of the gospel were never meant to be lords and masters; but according to their name, so is their work—ministers, servants, and therefore humble, laborious, faithful. Such were the apostles, and such are their true successors.

2d, God hath given this ministry to the apostles, and through them to all who believe to the end of the age. The same God who was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, has appointed an agency by which to make known his friendliness towards mankind, and the work which he has accomplished in order to bring the race into friendship with himself.

3d, Being a ministry of reconciliation, it is not like the law—a ministry of death, or of condemnation. Being a ministry of reconciliation, the reconciliation of men to God is its grand design. Our great work is to get men to be friends of God. Hence the preachers of the gospel, the ministers of Jesus Christ, are faithful to the service only as they keep this end in view.

2. The word of reconciliation.

1st, The word is the doctrine of reconciliation, embracing all the facts and truths by means of which God has seen fit to bring mankind into friendship with himself. This in the very nature of things was necessary to the end in view. A word of estrangement and war may subdue, but will never reconcile. A word of reconciliation has a reconciling influence, and in the nature of things tends to lead men to repent, and to lay down the weapons of rebellion. And such is the power of the gospel. It is a conciliating word, display-

ing the friendliness of God to man; his unwillingness for their destruction; his merciful, righteous, and costly plan for their restoration. Hence the word of reconciliation is a friendly and a reconciling word. Every word of the gospel, being a word of conciliation, is a word of reconciliation. God loved the world—a word of conciliation; Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—a word of conciliation; Christ died for our sins; and so on with every gospel statement. Here is the winning, drawing, captivating, sweet, soft, dewlike, subduing power of the gospel. Thus God pleads with men; and thus we must deal with our fellow-men if we would win them, both in worldly and in spiritual things.

2d, God hath put this word in the apostles, and through them in the Scriptures which they were inspired to write, in which we have the great and glorious truths which they were taught and commanded to preach. The idea of these words we have in chap. iv. 6. This word, being a light from God, God hath shined in our hearts. Being a treasure of truth, we have this treasure in earthen vessels. Thus also all believers have it in them.

3. The ambassadorship of those to whom God has given this ministry.

1st, An ambassador is one who is sent by a chief ruler to transact business with the parties concerned, according to the will and in the place of his master. He is a servant going in stead of the ruler himself, but having no authority to give an opinion, or say a word,

but according to the will of the prince who sends him.

2d, It is a question with some whether Paul is here speaking of the apostles only, or whether his words are applicable to all the ministers of reconciliation. Our reply is: The apostles were Christ's immediate ambassadors, because personally sent by him into all the world to preach the gospel to every creature. But as they could never go personally into all the world, nor could their personal ministry last to the end of the age, it is clear that the commission of embassy given to them must in some sense reach to others, such as Timothy and Titus; and from them to faithful men who would be able to teach others also, 2 Tim. ii. 2. Hence, while no man now can be an ambassador for Christ in the same sense with the apostles, yet in a subordinate sense others may. One thing is sure, that as no man was sent by Christ to whom God did not give the ministry, and in whom he did not put the word, of reconciliation, so is it now. No man, therefore, can possibly be an ambassador for Christ unless he is himself reconciled to God. What king would ever send a foe to his own person, will, and government, on an embassage of any kind; much more to treat with foes, in order to a cessation of hostilities?

4. The proclamation of God and of Christ by the gospel ambassadors.

1st, The duty of Christ's ambassadors, and therefore of all Christ's people, is to call upon their fellow-men, to beseech them to be reconciled to God. This inti-

mates that it is not enough to make a statement of gospel facts, however clear and scriptural. It is our duty also to appeal to their consciences, to rouse them to action in order to reconciliation, and therefore to exhort, yea, to beseech and to pray them to be reconciled to God. Are not many Christian ministers and friends behind in this great duty?

2d, The earnestness and urgency with which the call should be made are seen in the two terms here employed —*beseech* and *pray*. The first term literally signifies to *call to*, then to *exhort*, to *beseech*, to *comfort*—always implying earnestness and kindness combined. The second is still stronger, signifying to *pray supplicatingly, imploringly*. This gives us a lively view of the feeling and manner in which preachers and all Christians should deal with souls.

3d, Inasmuch as Christian preachers, and all who make known the word of reconciliation, are but messengers and servants—the messengers of God, and the servants of Christ—when they beseech men to be reconciled to God, God himself is beseeching through them; and when they pray and implore men to be reconciled to God, they are imploring for Christ—that is, in the place of Christ. The words ὑπερ χριστου, which are twice repeated in the same verse, our version renders *for Christ*, and *in Christ's stead*. There is no reason for this variation, the idea in both cases being one and the same—namely, servants acting for a master: so that what is said by the messenger in his master's name is to be received as if said personally by

the master himself. This Jesus himself teaches, Matth. x. 40; Luke x. 16; John xiii. 20; and thus the Galatians had received Paul, Gal. iv. 14; and thus should every gospel hearer receive the message of reconciliation, however lowly the messenger.

4th, Let those who are yet estranged from God mark the great truth here presented to view—both God and his Son Jesus Christ beseeching and imploring you to be reconciled. In this you see the love and the earnestness of both the Father and the Son. God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; therefore, he is not willing that you should perish. Examples of God's beseeching we have in Isa. i. 18; Ezek. xxxiii. 11; an example of Christ's beseeching, Matth. xi. 28–30. Can you withstand the beseeching of God? How long do you mean to hold out against the imploring of Christ? As God does not wish the estrangement between you and him to last any longer, but desires and entreats you to become friends, what interest can you have in a refusal? what benefit can you look for in living and dying a foe to the Allmighty?

5th, The duty of men in order to be reconciled to God. The question may arise in some minds, What must we do in complying with the call? Two things embrace the whole—"repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ." In other words, Give up sin, and take in the Saviour. Put away that which God most hates, and receive him whom God most loves. Sin being the occasion of the estrange-

ment, you cannot be friends of God, and live in rebellion. God's Son being the propitiation for sin, and the only Saviour from sin, and therefore the only way to God, you cannot be friends of God, and reject, or even neglect him. It is clear, then, in the very nature of the case, that till you forsake all manner of sin, and put your souls into the hands of Jesus, you remain foes to God. And it is as clear that in the moment God and you are at one regarding sin and the Saviour, then you are pardoned and reconciled, "justified by faith, and at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Oh, then, to all unbelievers we say, "Be ye reconciled to God." This very day renounce sin; this very hour embrace the Saviour. You have been enemies to your Maker, and therefore to yourselves, long enough. The war is your shame; continue it, and it will be your everlasting ruin. Success on your part is impossible. Your destruction is sure. Will you not immediately yield? Surrender to God must be honourable and happy for man. We beseech you, then, and God beseeches you; we pray you, and Christ prays you—"Be ye reconciled to God."

V. THE ARRANGEMENT WHICH GOD HAS MADE IN ORDER TO THE HONOURABLE AND LASTING RECONCILIATION OF MANKIND TO HIMSELF.

"For he hath made him who knew not sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him."

In these deep and wonderful words notice three

things: The spotlessness of Christ; the reckoning of sin to him on our account; and the design in view.

1. The spotlessness of Christ.

1st, These words do not mean that Jesus did not know *about* sin. As there are thousands who know about God while they do not know him, implying that they have no acquaintance nor fellowship, because no pleasure nor sympathy; so Jesus knew about sin while he did not know it. Our first parents before they fell knew only good; but after their fall they knew both good and evil. Jesus, like our first parents before their fall, knew good only. He did not approve of sin, he had no acquaintance, no fellowship with it, no hand in it, no heart for it. His nature, in all its variety, was pure and perfectly sinless.

2d, Ample evidence of the spotlessness of Jesus we have in the holiness of his life, and in the witness borne by both friends and foes. Even Judas said, "I have betrayed innocent blood;" and Pilate, "I find no fault in this man." The voice of his Father was, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." He himself was conscious of no sin when he said, "I always do the things which are pleasing to my Father;" and, "The prince of this world cometh, and findeth nothing in me." In short, all bear out this great truth: "He did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth"—"He was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners."

3d, The nature and design of the Saviour's undertaking rendered spotlessness indispensable to its ac-

complishment. As the apostle John says, "Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins, and in him sin is not." Had there been any sin in him he could not have been the Son of God, and he himself would have needed an atonement and reconciliation. He could not, therefore, have become a propitiation in order to the reconciliation of others. Here, then, is our joy and boast, and the glory of Jesus, "He knew not sin." Hence the glorious word, "Behold the Lamb of God"—the innocent, pure, and spotless Lamb.

2. The reckoning of sin to Christ on our account.

1st, The fact that God made Christ to be sin, assures us that, whatever be the meaning, it was something wise and right and good — something in perfect accordance with all the perfections of the Almighty—something high, holy, and pure—something worthy of a God.

2d, The fact that it was Christ who was made sin, one who, from his cradle to his grave, knew not sin, assures us that there was, and there could be, no sin in his being made sin, whatever its meaning may be.

3d, Only two ideas of the meaning are admissible, and both come to the same thing. The one is, that God reckoned sin to him although he had no sin. The other, that God made him a sin-offering. Both are great truths in Christ, and the one rises out of the other. God could not have made Christ a sin-offering had he not in some way made him sin; that is, reckoned sin to him. The same was the case of the

bullocks and goats, the rams and lambs which were offered in sacrifice for sin. In the words of this scripture, they must have been made sin before they could be made sin-offerings. Both truths are foretold of Jesus by the profet Isaiah. While Paul says, "God made him to be sin;" Isaiah says, "Jehovah caused to meet on him the iniquity of us all." Or should we read, "God made him a sin-offering?" Isaiah says, "Yet Jehovah was pleased to bruise him; he put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin," Isa. liii. 6, 10. With this explanation, we agree with Andrew Fuller in preferring the rendering of our version.* The same word, *sin*, being twice used in the sentence, and by manifest contrast, demands that it be so rendered in both cases. Also the contrasted idea, "*made righteousness*," denoting righteousness reckoned where it is not, teaches us that the words, "*made sin*," denote sin reckoned where it is not. The great truth here taught then is, that while Christ had no sin, God reckoned sin to him, and accordingly gave him up to poverty and privations like other men, and to suffering and death for sin.

4th, The fact that God made Christ to be sin for others, teaches us that it was an arrangement of love and mercy—"*For us*," on our behalf, for our benefit. God never would have dealt with his sinless Son as a sinner, but for the good of sinners.

5th, On the interesting inquiry, for what sinners was Christ made sin, we need not here enlarge, as we

* Fuller on Imputation. Works, vol. ii., pp. 505, 506, 537, 538.

have attended to it in former discourses; enough to say that the context teaches us that the whole family of mankind is embraced. As God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself—that is, doing whatever was needful to the reconciliation of men to their Maker; and as Christ's being made sin for men is the essence of the work needful to man's reconciliation, it is clear that he must have been made sin for the world. Again, as the call of God to all men is, "Be ye reconciled to God;" and as none could be reconciled unless Christ had been made sin for them, it is clear that he was made sin for all. Every gospel hearer, therefore, every child of Adam, every one whose duty it is to be reconciled to God, may say, without doubt, "Him who knew not sin he made to be sin for us."

3. The design of God in thus reckoning our sins to Christ.

1st, The righteousness of God, we have already seen, is the righteousness of Christ; called God's, because from him; Christ's, because in him. See the discourse on Rom. i. 16, 17.

2d, We become the righteousness of God in the same sense in which Christ was made sin, namely, by the imputation to us of that which is not our own, but another's. Christ had no sin, yet sin was laid to his account; we have no righteousness, yet righteousness is laid to our account. The sin laid to Christ's account was man's; the righteousness laid to our account is God's and Christ's. As Christ could not literally be made sin, for the innocent cannot be guilty;

so we could not literally be made righteousness, for the guilty cannot be innocent. Yet, as Christ's being made sin implies that he was condemned, so our being made righteousness implies that we are justified. As his condemnation was suffering even unto death, so our justification is deliverance even unto life. As the sin which Christ was made was the sin of man—that is, our sin was laid to his account, and for it, and for us he died; so the righteousness which we become is the righteousness of God—that is, God's righteousness; in other words, Christ's righteousness is laid to our account, and through it and in him we live.

3d, The necessity of this wonderful means to this gracious and glorious end, is manifest from many considerations; such as the wisdom of God, the nature of sin, the honour of the law, the satisfaction of justice. From these, two circumstances arise in the very nature of things; namely, that justification is impossible without righteousness, and the righteousness of sinners impossible without an atonement for sin. And here is the good news, that in Christ the atonement is made, and a righteousness from God provided. And thus, the fountain being opened for cleansing and pardon, the way is opened by which the guiltiest of the guilty may become righteous, and accordingly "be made the righteousness of God in Christ."

Such, then, is the glorious arrangement into which God has entered, and which he has accomplished, in order to the honourable and lasting reconciliation of mankind to himself. On its necessity we do not need

to enlarge, as it is evident from the very nature of the case, and from the fact already named, that men could not be restored to the friendship of God, nor be at peace with their Maker, while in the condemnation and power of sin. Hence men must become the righteousness of God in Christ before they can be reconciled; they must be justified by faith before they can have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Conclusion—

1. As God is the origin of all things in the reconciliation of mankind to himself, let us give him all the praise. "Not to us, Jehovah, not to us, but to thy name give the glory."

2. As believers are already reconciled to God, let them do nothing to estrange, nothing to displease. Never forget that our God, being high and holy, is a jealous God. Let us remember, that as sin is the only cause of estrangement, we must keep away from it in order to enjoy his smile; and that, as Jesus is the only way to friendship, we must abide in him in order to abide in the friendship of God for ever.

3. As the reconciliation of sinners to God is the grand design of the mediation of Christ, let no one remain a foe. As in this glorious fact God has given such a display of his friendliness to men, to guilty, perishing sinners, let every one by this fact, and by this friendliness, be persuaded to lay down his weapons, to cease the wicked, the foolish, the useless war, and be immediately reconciled to God.

4. As reconciliation to God is the word, and therefore the burden of the gospel ministry, here is one test at least by which every true minister of Jesus may be known. He himself must be reconciled to God; and the reconciliation of his fellow-men must be his constant aim. If not, be his notions of apostolic succession and ministerial ambassadorship what they may, the man who himself is yet a foe to God, or who aims not to bring men to lay down their weapons of rebellion, is no successor of the apostles, no ambassador for Christ. Oh, when will the churches be purged of unreconciled, unconverted ministers?

5. As God has accomplished an arrangement so wonderful and so glorious by which to bring men into a state of honourable and lasting friendship with himself, let every one wisely and thankfully acquiesce. Be assured that as God could not open the door of friendship without opening a fountain of cleansing, it is impossible for you to enter into the door unless you first wash in the fountain. Be assured also that as Christ had never been made sin for us unless he had willingly acquiesced with his Father's arrangement, and undertaken our cause, so you can never become the righteousness of God in him unless you willingly acquiesce. As therefore the friendliness of God and the atonement of Christ have opened the fountain and the door, have faith in God, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you are forgiven and cleansed, justified and reconciled.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GOSPEL THE GOOD NEWS OF ETERNAL LIFE IN CHRIST THE GIFT OF GOD TO MEN.

"If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater: because this is the witness of God which he hath witnessed concerning his Son. He who believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he who believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not on the witness," &c. —1 JOHN v. 9–12.

IN these words we have what we regard the eighth unfolding of the Gospel roll. The great truth here taught is, that eternal life is given by God in Christ to the children of men; from which it follows, that if Christ is ours, eternal life is ours.

1. To see the beauty and force of this gospel statement more fully, it is needful that we glance at the foregoing part of the chapter. At the beginning, the apostle John shows that there are three things inseparable—namely, faith, the new birth, and victory over the world. Those only who believe in the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus are born of God and overcome the world. Read verses 1, 4, 5. He goes on to show that Jesus having come by water and blood, there are now three abiding witnesses to his Messiahship and

Sonship—namely, the Spirit, the water, and the blood, all agreeing in one. The holy Spirit by the word and in the hearts and lives of believers in Jesus, and baptism and the supper in the Church, all agree in one glorious witness to the Lord Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God.

2. And what gives interest to the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, and the one anointed by his Father to be the deliverer of mankind? Is it not this, that man having lost eternal life in Adam, their common father and earthly head, God has restored it in his own Son Jesus, whom he has given to be a spiritual head; and that as we have forfeited the life in virtue of union to Adam by flesh, we regain it in virtue of union to the second Adam by faith? Such is the witness of God himself as set forth in this portion of the gospel roll.

3. Before entering on this scripture, we may observe that the three words, *witness*, *testify*, and *record*, are but one in the Greek—namely, μαρτυρια, the noun *witness*, and μαρτυρεω, the verb to *witness*. As the other words *record* and *testify*, but especially *record*, may lead some to imagine a difference of idea where there is none, we keep to the one word, *witness*.

In this glorious exhibition of the gospel three things mainly are to be observed:—The contrast between the witness of men and the witness of God; the contrast between the believer and the unbeliver in relation to God and his witness; and what the witness of God is.

I. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE WITNESS OF MEN AND THE WITNESS OF GOD.

"*If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater; because this is the witness of God which he hath witnessed concerning his Son.*"

1. The witness of men.

1st, The witness of men is the testimony which they bear to the things which they know. As, for example, in the daily transactions of life, in commerce and trade, in the arts and sciences, in history and filosofy, in anything which they see and hear, or otherwise learn.

2d, This witness we receive daily. Our property and life, the lives and best interests of our families and friends we trust upon it. Without faith in man, society could not hold together. There are many things which we ourselves witness, seeing them with our own eyes, hearing them with our own ears, and otherwise perceiving them for ourselves. But there are many more things which we receive on the testimony of the eyes and ears and judgment of others. And although men can fail and be mistaken, although they deceive and lie, and even betray the most sacred trusts, yet we are obliged to trust and do trust them day by day. "We receive the witness of men."

2. The witness of God.

1st, The witness of God is greater. God himself being greater than man, whatever witness he bears must also be greater; greater in importance, and

therefore more worthy of attention; greater in sureness, and therefore more worthy of trust. He ever speaks truth; he never utters trifles. He cannot lie, nor witness to a falsehood. He cannot deceive, nor fail to fulfil every trust reposed in him. On these grounds, whatever the witness of God may be, we should receive it much more readily than the witness of men.

2d, What the witness is the apostle here states, as a reason why it is greater, and why we should receive it. Mark the force of the word ὅτι, *because, for.* "Because this is the witness of God which he hath witnessed concerning his Son." God witnessed concerning his Son when he came both in water and in blood; when he opened the windows of heaven on him coming out of Jordan, and when he raised him from the dead, he declared Jesus to be his well-beloved Son, and therefore the long-looked-for Messiah, the Saviour of the world, Matth. iii. 16, 17; John v. 36, 37; viii. 17, 18; Rom. i. 1–4. This is a great witness, both because of the great wonders wrought in the opening of the sky, and the opening of the grave; and also because of the great truths wrapped up in the sonship and salvation of Jesus. This witness is greater than any ever delivered by man.

3. Reason demands the reception of God's witness more than man's.

1st, Seeing that we receive the witness of men, how much more should we receive the witness of God? Why should men receive the less, and not the greater?

Why should they regard that which appertains to the body and the life which now is, and neglect that which concerns the soul and the life to come? If we could not be happy, if we could not get on in the present life without faith in man; how can we be happy, how can any one prosper in the future without faith in God?

2d, An important question arises, whether it is as easy to receive the witness of God as the witness of men? Some speak, and many act as if it were a hard thing to believe God. Why should it be harder to believe God than man? The difficulty must be either with the witness of God or the hearts of men. It cannot be with God, for he is the God of truth and without iniquity, and cannot lie. It cannot be with the witness of God, for it is plain and the evidence abundant. As far as God is concerned, it must be easier to believe him than man; one who never lies, and who cannot lie, nor be mistaken, than one who is daily breaking his word, or liable to be wrong. The Greeks found it easier to receive the witness of Xenocrates than of any other man, when they declared in court that "it was needless to swear one who knew not what untruth was." The difficulty is with the hearts of men, not with the witness of God. It is in man's carelessness and indifference about spiritual things, and his love of worldly pleasures and pursuits. It is the unwillingness of a wayward child to hear the word of a faithful father. Man's unconcern about the soul, about God and eternity; man's pleasure in sin and the

world,—these are the hindrances to a cheerful and universal reception of the great witness of God.

Let me implore every one who has not yet received this witness to lay it solemnly and undelayingly to heart, and to receive it now. No longer trifle; no longer excuse yourselves for not attending to it. At once regard it with confidence and joy, and the blessing is yours.

II. THE CONTRAST BETWEEN HIM WHO RECEIVES THE WITNESS OF GOD, AND HIM WHO RECEIVES IT NOT IN RELATION TO THE WITNESS AND TO GOD.

"*He who believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He who believeth not God hath made him a liar,*" &c.

Here we observe the honour which the believer in Jesus puts upon the witness, and the dishonour which the unbeliever puts upon God.

1. The believer in the Son of God honours the witness by having it in himself.

1st, As God's witness is concerning his Son, believing in the Son of God is here seen to be only another word for receiving the witness of God. To believe in the Son of God, then, is to receive whatever God says concerning him. In order to this, what must the unbeliever do, but hear what God the Lord doth speak, and search the Scriptures, which witness of Jesus, and see what God hath said of his Son? John v. 39.

2d, All who believe in Jesus, the Son of God, have God's witness in themselves.

(1.) From what we have already seen, this witness is not the witness of the Spirit to the sonship of believers, but the witness of the Father to the sonship of Christ. Those who receive the witness of the Father to Christ's sonship, get with it the witness of the Spirit to their own. But this is not the witness spoken of here. Our margins mistakingly point to Rom. viii. 16. The right marginal is Rom. i. 1–4, where we have the witness ; and chap. x. 6–10, where we see how it is in those who believe.

(2.) Accordingly, to have the witness in ourselves is to have God's word concerning Christ in ourselves. It is to have the gospel in our mind, and heart, and mouth ; in our mind, knowing and understanding it ; in our heart, trusting and loving it ; in our mouth, owning it, and rejoicing in it as all our salvation and all our desire. With this accords Paul's exhibition of the word of faith, which is not only nigh to all who hear it, and therefore within their reach ; but also in the mouth and heart of all who believe it, and therefore they have it in themselves. "For with the heart it is believed unto righteousness, and with the mouth it is acknowledged unto salvation." Those who believe in Christ have the witness of God in themselves, because in receiving Christ they receive the witness, and abiding in Christ they retain the witness. All who have the Scriptures have the witness of God in their hands ; but those who have Christ have the witness in their hearts. Receiving Christ, they receive his own witness and his Father's, and thus they put

their name and their seal to the witness, "sealing that God is true," John iii. 33.

(3.) Let all remember that it is only as you have the witness of God in yourselves, it can regenerate, purify, and save you. In the hand, and not in the heart, it will only sink the soul deeper in the fires of hell. In both hands and heart, it will raise to endless life and boundless bliss. Let all, then, honour the witness which God hath given of his Son, by giving it a place in your hearts. Take it with the warmest welcome, hold it with the firmest grasp. Keep it not out, let it not go, have it in yourselves, for it is your life. Thus, let every one believe in the Son of God, and thereby have the witness in himself.

2. The unbeliever is guilty of putting the greatest dishonour upon God, inasmuch as not believing him he makes him a liar.

1st, As God is the witness of his Son, believing him and receiving his witness are one and the same. Hence the three expressions here employed all refer to the same thing; "receiving the witness" given, "believing in the Son of God," who is witnessed of, and "believing God," the witness-bearer.

2d, The awful crime of which the unbeliever is guilty—"making God a liar;" that is, treating the witness borne as a lie, you necessarily treat the witness-bearer as a liar. The man who receives not the gospel into his heart, treats it as a lie. The man who has not the witness in himself, treats God who speaks as if he were a liar. We wish very much to succeed in

fastening the reality and the guilt of this awful crime on the conscience of every unbeliever who hears or reads this statement. We know, if you would only think of it, you would see it; and if you saw it, you would be convinced of your sin, and ashamed of your conduct, and alarmed at your danger. It may be you do not see yourself guilty of the charge. But consider that, if any one tells you a thing, and you believe him not, you make him a liar. And so it is with the great God. His witness concerning his Son you have not in you, because you have not received it, and you have not received it because you have not believed God; you therefore treat him as unworthy of being believed, that is, as a liar. Look, dear friends, at the awfulness of the crime. In calling a fellow-worm a liar, you may be right, because he may be false. But you know that it is impossible for God to lie, and you know that by the wonders which he wrought and the words which he spoke for Jesus, he is his witness; the witness therefore is true, and yet you treat it as false. To call a man who is speaking truth a liar, is contempt and insult. And the crime has often led to death. But what is this compared with the contempt and the insult of the unbeliever towards the Allmighty, who is not a man that he can lie, whose glory is that he is "the unlying God." Nothing can more insure the destruction of the soul. Every sin is death, but this sin shuts up, or refuses to enter, the only avenue to eternal life. The man who believes not God is guilty of the greatest falsehood, and therefore is himself the liar.

To make the unlying God a liar, then, is the surest way to the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; being cast into which is the second death, everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power. Such, dear friends, is the sin, and such the doom of every one who believes not in the Son of God. In the name of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, his only begotten and well beloved Son, we beseech you to flee from this heinous sin and dreadful doom. Say and seal that God is true, and heaven with all its joys is yours.

III. The great truths of the witness of God here presented to view.

"*And this is the witness that God hath given to us eternal life. And this life is in his Son. He who hath the Son hath the life; he who hath not the Son of God hath not the life.*"

In these words we have what may be considered a second view of God's witness. The former regards the person and work of Christ; this latter, the blessing which is in Christ and his work for the children of men. The former is the good news that Christ, God's Son, died for men's sins and rose again; the latter is the good news that by this means eternal life is again brought within the reach of the human race.

In these words we observe four things regarding the witness—namely, that eternal life is the gift of God to men; that this life is in Christ; accordingly, having

Christ, the life is ours; but those who have not Christ, the life is not theirs.

1. Eternal life the gift of God to mankind.

1st, What eternal life is. It is interesting to observe that the same blessing set forth in the first unfolding of the gospel roll is again brought to view in the last, showing that it is the great boon lost in sin and restored in the gospel; lost in Adam and restored in Christ.

(1.) It is life. Not the life of the body—for the body is dead because of sin—but the life of the spirit —for the spirit is life because of righteousness, Rom. viii. 10. That is, while the body is doomed to die because of the sin of Adam, the spirit is saved from dying because of the righteousness of Christ. Thus we read, chap. v. 17. This life is the life of justification, and the life of regeneration; life by the application of Christ's blood, and life by the indwelling and inworking of Christ's spirit. This is the life of God in the soul—a life in God and to God—a life like God and with God. This life begins with faith in Christ, when, through the word of truth, the soul is born of God, and passes from death unto life. The same life is nourished by constant feeding upon the Word of God, and the constant inworking of the holy Spirit, which, as a well of living water, is constantly springing up into everlasting life.

(2.) It is life eternal, because, while beginning in the new birth, it knows no end; but, as the very word imports, it is for ever and ever. While the believer dies

as well as the unbeliever, yet he shall not die for ever. In the resurrection both will rise again. But the ungodly will die the second death; while the godly, being in Christ, have their names written in the Lamb's book of life, and will die no more, but dwell with God in endless bliss. This is everlasting life—a crown of life which fadeth not away.

2d, To whom has God given eternal life? This must be an inquiry of no small moment to every child of Adam. The life of the body being so much prized, how much more the life of the soul? It is true, life is less valued by some than by others. To some it is very dear; while others are very reckless of it. Still with all this variety, the love of life is a principle belonging to all living beings in a natural condition. If life, then, is desirable, who does not desire to live for ever? Who, then, is not eager to know whether or not eternal life is reachable? In the scripture before us, the apostle says, "This is the witness, that God hath given to us eternal life." Who, then, are intended in the word *us?* Who are those to whom eternal life is given? In answering this all-important question, we notice—

(1.) The question is not, Who have eternal life? or, Who alone ever will have it? This is answered in the next verse.

(2.) The question is, To whom has God given eternal life? and, accordingly, for whom is it provided? and who are welcome to it? The very fact that the apostle makes a distinction in these two statements shows that there is a difference.

(3.) Reason itself teaches that we must ever distinguish between God's giving and man's receiving. God may give what men do not receive. If this distinction were regarded, we believe there would be more agreement among Christians on these questions. Because millions do not have eternal life, this does not prove that God has not given it. There are many things which God has given to mankind, but which thousands do not have, because either of the selfishness and unrighteousness of others, or their own weakness, or wickedness, or neglect. For example, he has given abundance for all men to eat and drink and enjoy. Freedom and fresh air are God-given blessings for all, yet all do not have them. The same distinction exists between the giving and the having of gospel blessings. If God did not give them, men could not have them. But because millions do not have them, it does not follow that God has not given them; it may be rather because men have not received them. As we have already said on John iii. 16, to give a thing is either to put it into the hands of one person, so as to make it singly his own, or to bring it within the reach of a number, so as to convey a benefit common to them all, and enjoyable by each one. As this latter is clearly what is intended in the giving of Christ, so this is what we understand by the giving of eternal life to men.

(4.) God has given eternal life, inasmuch as he has provided it for the human race in the person and work of his Son, thereby having arranged for the removal of the forfeiture occasioned by Adam's rebellion. He has

given eternal life, inasmuch as he has made it possible and free, and brought it within our reach. As the Scriptures are God's gift to mankind, and eternal life is in them, therefore in giving the one he has given the other, John v. 39. As Christ is God's gift to mankind, and eternal life is in him, it necessarily follows that eternal life is a gift of the same extent—plainly learnt from the first and last words of John iii. 16. As it is the duty of all men to search the Scriptures in order to obtain eternal life; and as it is the duty of all men to receive Christ, in whom alone we can have eternal life; eternal life, therefore, must be a gift—a free gift to all.

(5.) The fact that eternal life is God's gift to the race is clear from a comparison of the witness, and the crime of those who do not receive it.

(1st,) The witness is what God hath said concerning his Son. Those who receive it not make God a liar. And why? Because it is their duty to receive it; and because it is true, whether they receive it or not. But if they receive it, they have eternal life. And why, but because eternal life is the gift of God to men?

(2d,) The witness farther is that God hath given to us eternal life. Those who receive not this witness make God a liar. And why? Because it is their duty to receive it; and because it is true, whether they receive it or not. But if God has not made a gift of eternal life to them as well as to others, how are they to believe, how are they to receive the witness, and how can they be making God a liar, if they do not receive

it? But some will say, If they receive the first witness, then they become partakers of the second. We reply, This is true; it is only when men receive Christ that they receive eternal life. But both are the witness and the gift of God before they are received, otherwise none could believe or receive them; and as they are free gifts, without money and without price, therefore all are welcome, therefore they are the witness and the gifts of God to all.

(6.) That eternal life is the gift of God to the race of man, we learn from other scriptures. Eternal life is the gift of God to all, inasmuch as he gives to all gospel hearers what he gave to Israel, the choice of life or death. Mark the words of Moses to Israel, "I call heaven and earth to witness this day against you. I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing. Therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live," Deut. xxx. 15, 19. This we learn also from the fact, that God says he has no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but in their conversion and life. "As I live, saith Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his ways and live. Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways, why will ye die?" Ezek. xxxiii. 11. Would he reason with sinners, and ask them, Why will ye die? if not on the understanding that their life was possible, and therefore that eternal life was a gift as free to one as to another? Again, from the assurance that God wishes all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and that he has made provision for this boon in the medi-

atorship and ransom of his Son, 1 Tim. ii. 3–6. Also from the declaration that the Lord is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, 2 Pet. iii. 9. Thus we find Moses and the profets, Christ and the apostles all teaching the same great and glorious truth, that God hath given to us eternal life.

(7.) A striking illustration of this truth we have in the preaching of Paul and Barnabas at Antioch in Pisidia. Mark the contrast between their Jewish and Gentile hearers, as stated by Paul and Luke. The Jews put the word of God away from them. In doing so they were judging themselves unworthy of eternal life. On the other hand, the Gentiles were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord and believed; not all of them, but as many as were determined for eternal life, Acts xiii. 46–48. This is not the place to enter upon an examination of this scripture. Enough here to say that after diligent and anxious search, we believe that both the disputed word, and the contrasted conduct of the unbelieving Jews and the believing Gentiles, demand the idea of determination in relation to eternal life. This much we may all see, that if eternal life had not been the gift of God to both Jews and Gentiles, and therefore free to those who refused it as well as to those who received it, to those who judged themselves unworthy of it as well as to those who were determined on it, where were the point of Paul's remonstrance, and of the historian's remark?

(8.) While Jesus says he gives to his sheep eternal life, and they shall never perish, this is no objection to

our position. The less is included in the greater. The same variety is found in statements of the atonement. While we read that Christ loved the church, we also read that God loved the world. And while we read that Christ gave himself for the church, we also read that he gave himself a ransom for all. And in this very epistle we read that while he is a propitiation for our sins, that is, those who are of God, he is a propitiation not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world, that is, the world lying in wickedness. So the fact that Christ gives eternal life to his sheep is in perfect harmony with the truth that God has given eternal life to mankind. The one implies that God's gift makes it free to all; the other, that God's plan is that men must become Christ's sheep, Christ's followers, in order to get it, because it is given only through him and with him.

From the whole we conclude that while thousands of gospel hearers do not have eternal life, it is not because God has not given it, but because they do not receive it. "The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Here is the sum of the whole matter; because of sin we all die, but God in his love has through Christ made to us a gift of eternal life, so that we need not die. Only receive Christ through whom the life flows, and the life is yours. Saved by Christ, you are saved from sin, and therefore from death, and accordingly you live for ever with God in glory. What is wanting to those who have not eternal life is therefore not God's

giving, but their taking. None desiring eternal life and willing to take it in God's way will be refused.

2. Eternal life in the Son of God for mankind.

To those who ask, where is the life? the apostle says, "*This life is in his Son.*" Life in Christ may be best understood by illustration.

1st, As God made Adam the source of animal life to his seed, so has he made Christ the source of spiritual life to his seed. Hence says Jesus, "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." That is, as God is the source of all life, he has appointed his Son to be the source of new life. The animal life flows from God through Adam; the spiritual life from God through Christ, the last Adam, the founder of a new family. As Paul says, "The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a life-giving spirit." Thus eternal life is in Christ.

2d, Life is in Christ for men much in the same way as death is in Adam. As on account of Adam's sin, his children being one with him all die, and therefore they have death in him; so on account of Christ's righteousness, those who are one with him all live, and therefore they have life in him. Because of Adam's disobedience, the animal life which we have in him is cut off, accordingly eternal life is forfeited and lost. Because of Christ's obedience unto death, spiritual life flows through him into the soul, and accordingly eternal life is regained. Hence says Paul, "If by the offence of one death reigned by one, much more they

who receive abundance of the grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ." Such is the arrangement of God, by which he hath brought about, "that as sin hath reigned in death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

3d, Life, eternal life is in Christ for men, in virtue of his being the substitute of the race, the mediator of God and of men. His death for our sins is the death of condemnation and estrangement, and the life of justification and regeneration. In other words, Christ is the death of death judicial and spiritual, and the life of judicial and spiritual life. The perpetuity of the former is eternal death, and of the latter eternal life. Because Christ died, men now may live for ever. The blood of God's Lamb being shed for sin, is a stream which stays the flow of death, and brings eternal life to men. He died that we might live, that he might bring us to God, to the life and friendship of God for ever. As this life is in the Son of God, he himself is called the life, the eternal life, that is, the spring of the life, because he conveys it to men. Hence says John, "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." "And the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and witness, and show to you the eternal life which was with the Father and was manifested to us." Hence Jesus himself says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; none cometh to the Father but through me." Thus as temporal death is in Adam, because of his sin; and as eternal death is

in men because of their own sin; so is life, judicial, spiritual, eternal life, in Christ because of his righteousness; and in those who believe in him because of union to him. As eternal death is in sin, and therefore in sinners, eternal life is in him who alone can take away sin, and therefore in those alone whose sin is taken away.

3. Eternal life being in Christ for men, those who have him have the life which is in him.

Such is the good news proclaimed in these wonderful words, "*He who hath the Son hath the life.*"

1st, To have the Son denotes that in some way Christ is ours. We have him as God gives him—namely, as our Teacher, Saviour and King, our Shepherd, Leader and Commander, our all and in all. Having him thus, we are his disciples, his saved ones, his subjects and followers, his servants and friends. Having him thus, we sit at his feet, we hear his word, we rely on his sacrifice, we bow to his sceptre, we obey his commands, we follow him whithersoever he goeth. Having Christ, we are in him, and he in us; in him, and thereby justified; he in us, and thereby we are sanctified. As we are in Adam by nature, but not in Christ, to have Christ implies that we have received him as God has given him—that is, we have come to him and believed in him. Those only have the Son who believe the witness of God concerning him, and who therefore believe in him.

2d, Having the Son of God, in the very nature of things, insures life eternal. Just as sin and death are

inseparable, and therefore those who live in sin must die for ever, so Christ and life are inseparable, and therefore those who live in Christ must live for ever. As we cannot get quit of death unless we get quit of sin, and as we get quit of sin only as we have him who beareth it away by the sacrifice of himself, so in the sin-bearer only we get quit of death, and thus live for ever. Having Christ, we necessarily have the forgiveness of our sins and the friendship of God for ever. Having Christ, we necessarily have the renewal of our minds and the likeness of God for ever. Having Christ, we have the cleansing of his blood, and the indwelling of his word, and the inworking of his Spirit, and therefore meetness for eternal glory. Thus having the Son of God in our hearts, we have the life of God in our souls. It is interesting and encouraging to observe how much and how largely this great truth is taught by the Saviour himself, especially in the Gospel of John. He tells us that this was his Father's design in sending him into the world, chap. iii. 14–17; that he who believeth on him hath this life, ver. 36; also, he who heareth his word and believeth him who sent him, chap. v. 24–26; that the misery of his hearers was that they would not come to him to have the life, ver. 40; that it was his Father's will that every one who should see him and believe on him should have it, chap. vi. 40; that he was the bread of life, eating of which men could not fail to live for ever, ver. 47, 48, 50, 51, 53–58. Well might Peter in the same hour say, "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal

life." Again he says, "If any one keep my word he shall not see death for ever," chap. viii. 51, 52. And again, to his sheep—that is, those who hear his voice and follow him—he gives eternal life, and they shall not perish for ever, neither shall any one pluck them out of his hand, chap. x. 27, 28. And lastly, we have his glorious words to Martha, "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believeth in me, though dead, yet shall he live. And every one who liveth and believeth in me shall not die for ever. Believest thou this?" chap. xi. 25, 26. Put all these words together, and say, Could anything be made more sure than the words of our text, "He who hath the Son hath the life?"

4. Those, therefore, who have not Christ have not the life which is in him.

Thus the apostle John is wont to give the negative as well as the affirmative of a truth: "*He who hath not the Son of God hath not the life.*"

1st, Those have not the Son of God who do not know him, nor believe in him. They have him not because they take him not. They do not welcome him nor his truth into their minds. They refuse his righteousness; they neglect his salvation; in the strong language of Scripture, they tread him under foot.

2d, Those who have not Christ have not, and cannot have, the life which is in him. The reason is plain: Not having Christ who delivers from sin, they abide in sin, and therefore in death. As Christ is the death of sin and the life of the soul, those who have not him have the life of sin and the death of the soul. Eternal

life being in Christ, and eternal death in sin, those who prefer sin to Christ prefer death to life, and therefore must die. The neglect of Christ is the neglect of the way, and the only way, of life. Hence it is that those not in Christ are dead; for being in sin, they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Refusing Christ, the only Saviour from sin, they shut upon themselves the only way of escape from destruction in eternal fire.

Conclusion,—

1. From the whole we see that, as the first word of the Gospel roll is love,—the love of God,—the last word is life, everlasting life,—the life of man.

2. Who will be so ungrateful as to spurn that love? Who so foolish as to despise this life? Think, dear friends, of the greatness of that love; think of the grandeur of this life. If that love has made a sacrifice so great, how glorious must that life be which could not otherwise become ours!

3. Remember that between eternal life and eternal death there is no midway hereafter. Earth is midway now. From it you may rise to heaven, or sink to hell. While on earth your future must be determined. Now you must make your choice: Christ and life, or death and hell; Christ now and life for ever, or sin now and eternal fire. He who is wise for himself will choose life, and therefore Christ, that he may live.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL IN RELATION TO GOD.

"Glory to God among the highest."—LUKE ii. 14.
"The glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."—2 COR. iv. 6.

HAVING gone through the Gospel roll and surveyed its wonders, we are now to consider the glories of this roll, and, above all, the glory of God as displayed in these wonders.

1. The words of Paul, now read, teach us the glory which is in the gospel. It is the glory of God, the glory of his perfections and character, of his power and wisdom, his holiness and righteousness, his truth and love. It is the glory of these perfections in the face of Jesus Christ—namely, in his Godhead and manhood, his character and work, his life and sufferings, death and resurrection, ascension and intercession.

2. The words of the angels at Bethlehem teach us how we should ascribe to God all the glory of his name, because of the wonders he has wrought. The manifest allusion of these words is to the birth of the Son of God. They intimate in few but powerful terms the glorious results of this great event to God and to man, and the interest which it bestirs among the inhabi-

tants of heaven. The birth of Jesus Christ is the historical beginning of the gospel. It is the first sight of the unspeakable gift of eternal love. It is the first chapter of the record of the good tidings of that glorious work which the Saviour of the world had come to achieve in the deliverance of ruined man. With the whole work of Christ before us, we can now take a wider and larger view of the full bearing of this angelic song, "Glory to God among the highest." If the beginning of the gospel was glory, how great the glory of its accomplishment! The birth of Jesus Christ is good tidings of great joy to all people, something to make all nations glad because of its bearings on the temporal and eternal elevation of man. As the births of great and good men exercise a mighty influence on the condition of millions of mankind, much more the birth of him who had none but God for his Father. The birth of the Lord Jesus is one of the greatest events in the history of the world, an event which, more than any other which had yet taken place, was to bring "glory to God among the highest, peace on earth, and goodwill among men." The heavenly host, we may be sure, knew largely what glory was yet to redound to God, and what good to man, in the work of redemption now begun.

3. Having surveyed the bright array of marvels on the Gospel roll,—from the love of God in the gift of his Son to the life of men through his death,—we can seal this anthem of the heavenly multitude to be true; and we can sing, if it be possible for men to sing, in

strains higher than angels, "Glory to God among the highest."

4. On the words of the angels, we may observe two things before we go on. The preposition *εν*, *in*, or *among*, occurs twice, and while rendered *in* and *towards*, being before the plural in both cases, it should be *among*. Glory to God *εν ὑψιστοις*, *among* the highest, good will *εν ανθρωποις*, *among* men. Again, the word rendered *highest*, is here a plural qualitative, evidently requiring a substantive to be understood, as *heavens*, or *angels*. When this word is singular in the New Testament, it is a name of the Allmighty, as at chap. i. 32, 35. But when plural, as here, it is a name of the heavens or of the angels, denoting the highest created intelligences. It is thus used on another occasion when the Lord Jesus was riding into Jerusalem. Then a multitude, not of a heavenly, but of an earthly host, shouted, according to Matthew and Mark, "Hosanna among the highest;" according to Luke, "Peace in heaven and glory among the highest." Matt. xxi. 9; Mark xi. 10; Luke xix. 38. In this last, we have both heaven and the inhabitants named, the one clearly a step in expression above the other. From the whole, then, we understand the song of the angels to refer to the glory which the gospel would bring to God among the highest inhabitants of the universe.

5. These words of the angels intimate what the birth of Jesus in particular and the gospel in general would bring—namely, glory to God among the highest

tribes of intelligent creatures, peace on earth, and goodwill among men. They also intimate what the gospel displays. That alone which has glory, peace, and goodwill, can promote them. The gospel, therefore, is both a display and a means of advancing these things. More particularly let us notice these three glories of the gospel:—That it is both a display of the glory of God, and a means of its advancement among angels: That it is both a display of God's peaceful intentions, and a means of advancing peace upon earth: That it is both a display of God's goodwill towards men, and a means of advancing it in the bosoms of men one towards another.

First. THE GOSPEL IS BOTH A DISPLAY OF THE GLORY OF GOD, AND A MEANS OF ITS ADVANCEMENT AMONG ANGELS AND AMONG MEN.

From the words of Paul and of the angels combined, we notice that there is glory in the face of Jesus Christ, in his birth, and in the gospel at large. This glory is the glory of God, inasmuch as it belongs to him, and to him alone. It is the part of every right mind to render to God the glory which is his due. As his glory shines so brightly in the gospel, glory will redound to him notwithstanding all opposition and refusal.

I. THERE IS GLORY IN THE FACE OR PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND IN THE GOSPEL AT LARGE.

1. This is the case whether men see that glory or not. Some are ready to think that there is no glory

where they see none. The thought may be ignorance or presumption. There is much glory in many things where we do not see it. We may not see the thing having the glory, or we may see it and not see the glory which is in it, and therefore see no beauty to desire it. A stone found in the earth or on the shore may seem to us poor and worthless, because rough and unpolished, and yet be a jewel.

2. So with the Lord Jesus. Looking merely at his outward circumstances, at the poverty of his mother, the lowliness of his birth, the meanness of his cradle, his homelessness, and his dependence on the bounty of friends, men might say, Where is the glory? Hence, in the words of the profet, he had no form nor comeliness, and when they saw him, there was no beauty that they should desire him. Hence to the Jews, Jesus was a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence; and so he is to all the foes of truth. But those who believe in him, and are saved by him, see no glory to be compared to his. They know him to be, and they come to him as, a living stone, which, while disapproved by men, is yet choice with God and precious. Knowing that God and not man was his Father; that he had stooped from the highest heavens to the depths of poverty, on purpose to raise man from the depths of sin and wretchedness to the heights of holiness and heaven, they say, Here is glory beyond all martial, royal grandeur. In Jesus, as in one burning focus, as in one blazing sun, is concentrated the brightest glory which ever shone to the eye of man. In him is all true glory,

the glory of earth and of heaven, of man and of God. In him is the glory of the wisest power and the most powerful wisdom, for he is the power of God and the wisdom of God. And in him is the glory of man's deliverance from sin and all its woes, for he is made unto us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

3. To the unenlightened mind there is no glory in Bethlehem's manger or Calvary's cross. And surely if ever God was seen pouring scorn on human wisdom and worldly pride, it is in these two scenes; for truly humbling and sorrowful were the circumstances of the birth and death of his own dear Son. But to the mind enlightened from above, which sees light in the light of God, if glory is to be seen anywhere, it is in Bethlehem and Calvary. Hence we have angels praising God over the manger where the Saviour lay, and in one joyful anthem singing, "Glory to God;" and we have Paul exclaiming, "Let it not be that I should boast, but in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." In like manner, those who see best and know most the glory of Christ and his gospel feel their bosoms swell with holy transport, and in ecstasy cry out with the angelic host, "Glory to God among the highest."

II. THE GLORY WHICH SHINES IN THE PERSON OF THE LORD JESUS, AND IN THE GOSPEL AT LARGE, IS THE GLORY OF GOD, INASMUCH AS IT BELONGS TO HIM, AND TO HIM ALONE.

1. The glory belongs to God, because being the God

and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, all the glory of the Son is from the Father; and being the author and finisher of the plan of salvation, all the glory of the gospel is his. As all creation, being God's work, declares his glory—the glory of his power, and wisdom, and goodness—so the gospel. Of all the works and ways of God, of creation, and providence, and redemption, we are taught to say, "Who hath directed the Spirit of Jehovah, or, being his counsellor, hath taught him? With whom took he counsel, or who instructed him, and taught him in the path of judgment, and taught him knowledge, and showed him the way of understanding?" The whole plan of creation is God's alone, and therefore all the glory of it; so with the whole plan and glory of the gospel.

2. The gospel is the brightest manifestation of God's glory brought within the view of man. This position we shall endeavour to establish. The most highly accomplished mind unenlightened by the Spirit of God does not see it, any more than the unlettered peasant or untutored savage sees the glory of God in the beauties and wonders of nature. But as in the one case, so in the other, what is wanted is thought and attention. Let these be exercised, then how bright the beauties, how great the wonders and glories brought to view!

3. In three things chiefly do we see the surpassing brightness of God's glory in the gospel,—in its being a revelation of the brightest glories of the perfections of God; in its unveiling more of the wonders and glories

of the Godhead; and in its bringing the greatest glory and honour to the government of God.

I. The gospel is a revelation of the brightest glories of the perfections of God.

The glory of God is mainly the glory of his nature, what he is; the glory of his perfections, in distinction from the lowliest and the loftiest of his intelligent creation. While his glory shines in all his works and in all his ways, yet nowhere is its lustre so bright as in the gospel. In the plan and in the work of redeeming man, more than any other of his doings, we see the glory of his wisdom and power, his holiness and righteousness, his truth and love. In the gospel the perfections of God are seen in threefold glory: in their fullest development, in their brightest beauty, and in perfect harmony.

1. The gospel is glorious, because in it we see the fullest unfolding of the perfections of God.

If not the perfections, at least their workings have been gradually unfolded to the view of man. In creation we see only some of the perfections; in providence more; in revelation most of all. In the law and the profets we learn much of the goodness and mercy of God; his forbearance, his readiness to forgive, and his willingness to save. But it is not till Jesus himself appears, the Lamb of God, his Father's gift, bearing the sin of the world, that we see goodness and mercy fully unfolded to view. Had it not been for the redemption of man, the mercy of God had not been

known, and much of the glory of the Divine name had been hid from our view. Angels are doubtless learning more of God as time rolls on, and as the wonders of his ways are unfolding. We may well suppose, then, that the plan of mercy to our fallen race was to them a view of God such as they had never seen before.

"Here in thy gospel's wondrous frame fresh wisdom we pursue;
A thousand angels learn thy name, beyond whate'er they knew."

"The first archangel never saw so much of God before."

And we may be sure that the glorious diorama as it unfolds will disclose both to angels and men wonders of glory never seen nor known before. There may yet be many unfoldings of the Divine perfections and glory of which we have not the smallest conception. The words of Job regarding the wonders of nature are equally applicable to the mysteries of providence and grace, and are as appropriate now as they were then, "Lo, these are part of his ways; but how little a portion is heard of him! and the thunder of his power who can understand?" If eternity will be too short to utter all his praise, so to learn all his glories.

2. The gospel is glorious, because in it we see not only a larger unfolding, but also the more gorgeous brilliance, of the perfections of God.

Let us consider, then, how the brighter glory of the wisdom and power, the holiness and righteousness, the truth and love of God shines in the work of Christ, the gospel of our salvation.

1. The glory of wisdom in the gospel.

(1.) From a connected view of Efes. iii. 8–11, we see the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the manifold wisdom of God and his eternal purpose in Christ. What are the unsearchable riches of Christ but the glory of God in the face of Jesus—that is, the glories of the gospel? Here we find that God's manifold wisdom is made known even to angels in Christ's unsearchable riches, and all according to his eternal purpose in him. (2.) The word here rendered *manifold*, is more literally of *many hues, variegated*, and so rainbowlike. The wisdom of God is variegated, like to a rainbow round about the throne. In the face of Jesus we see God's wisdom reflected from the sun of righteousness, spanning the arch of heaven, shining through streams of mercy, dropping in gentle showers of blessing on the family of man. (3.) As the displays of this wisdom are manifold in the gospel, in the unsearchable riches of Christ, we see them to be fourfold —namely, in the purpose and plan, in the accomplishment and results.

1st, The design or purpose was to save man in such a way as to ensure and advance the glory of God. As far as man was concerned, the design of God was the rescue of the race from extinction, from death and destruction, and therefore from sin and disobedience; and its restoration to eternal life, and therefore to God and to holiness. In this we see wisdom—the wisdom of preserving workmanship in which not only the power

and wisdom, goodness and intelligence, but the very image and likeness, of the Allmighty Maker himself were so remarkably displayed. As all that God does is for his own great name,—that is, for the glory and honour of his name among all his intelligent creatures, —this also was a design in the rescue of man. And in this we see wisdom—the wisdom of regard to character. The being is devoid of wisdom and of virtue who has little or no regard to his own good name. An eye to his own honour is, therefore, essential to the perfection of God. This the Allmighty might have secured had he allowed man to perish; but doubtless, in ten thousand ways, greater honour comes to God, greater glory to his high and holy name, by man's preservation and redemption. Here then is glorious wisdom.

2d, The plan. Wisdom is seen in the harmony of a plan with the purpose, and in the selection of the best means for the end in view. All nature is an illustration. And in this we see alike one of the greatest wonders and glories of the gospel. As the purpose was to combine the salvation of the rebel race with the honour of the righteous Lawgiver, let us mark how wonderfully and gloriously this end is accomplished in the gospel. As the purpose is twofold, so is the plan —mediation and faith. An atonement for sin in the death of a sinless substitute; intercession for the sinner in the perpetual presence of the risen substitute before the throne of God. And faith in the substitute on the part of sinners in order to the benefit designed. In this twofold plan we see wisdom devising means the

most simple, and at the same time most wonderful, by which the twofold purpose is accomplished.

3d, The accomplishment of the plan is brought about in God's own Son becoming the substitute and surety, taking upon him the nature of man, and in that nature dying on the cross in order to an atonement for sin, and interceding on the throne in order to our daily acceptance with God. Thus in the person of Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man, there is a mediator between God and men, having the nature of both, and by his mediation opening up a way of salvation to man and of glory to God. Herein indeed is wisdom—Christ the wisdom of God; and made to every one who believeth in him wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

4th, The results of this arrangement fully display the wisdom of the purpose and the plan. The atonement having been made in Christ's death, the satisfaction of justice was seen in his resurrection from the dead, and his ascension to the right hand of God. Every soul which believes in Jesus is pardoned and acquitted for the surety's sake. The result is, that millions of minds are enlightened, hearts renewed, and souls saved; millions rescued from eternal fire, and wafted to the endless joys of boundless bliss; Satan, the tempter and destroyer of man, is vanquished and his works destroyed; and God, the Creator and Redeemer and Judge of man, unspeakably more honoured and glorified in the salvation of countless millions than if he had in justice allowed the race to perish. Thus

in the purpose and plan, in the accomplishment and results, we see the manifold wisdom of God. In conclusion, as God has shown his wisdom in saving man, let every one show his wisdom by saving himself through faith in the only Saviour. As God has so magnified his manifold wisdom in unfolding to our view the unsearchable riches of Christ, let all magnify that wisdom by partaking of these riches.

2. The glory of power in the gospel.

(1.) From 1 Cor. i. 18, we learn that the word of the cross is the power of God. This is only another word for the gospel which brings salvation through the cross. Here we observe how different the cross is to men—To those who perish foolishness. A crown by a cross, foolishness. Life by death, glory by suffering, blessing by a curse, righteousness for sinners by the condemnation of one who had no sin, heaven by no work of ours, but by faith in the work of another—all this foolishness to those who perish. But to those who are saved it is no foolishness, it is power, the power of God to accomplish all these ends.

(2.) The gospel unfolds to view the power of God in a series of supernatural wonders wrought both upon matter and upon mind, seen both in the work of Christ and of the holy Spirit, both in laying the foundations and in accomplishing the plan of redemption.

1st, Mark the power, the supernatural power, which is seen in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in order to the salvation of man. By a series of signs and

wonders God showed his own control and the control of his Son over all elements and agencies, friendly and hostile. In the birth and life, death and resurrection of Christ, Satan and his forces combined to hinder the work, but all in vain. In the life of Christ, we see the glory of God's power over the prince of darkness. His wiles did mischief, but in vain. In Christ's childhood, he employed Herod to seek his life, but in vain. In his manhood he sought to entrap him in the snares of sin, but failed. Leading one of Christ's apostles to give him over to his foes, and another to deny him, he tried to ruin the cause or mar the work, but failed. For the same end he employed the priests and the people, Pilate and Herod, Jews and Romans, to compass his death; but this end being gained, so far from the cause being ruined, this was the very means by which the work of salvation was accomplished. He then aimed to hinder Christ's resurrection by setting a guard and sealing the tomb, and devising a falsehood to hide his defeat; but angels and earthquakes, and the simple and unbendable witness of thirteen apostles and five hundred brethren, were more than a match for all his craft and skill. The ruler of this world came and found nothing in Christ. By the death of the cross he bruised the Saviour's heel, but by the resurrection from the grave the Saviour bruised his head.

2d, Mark the power of God in the work of the holy Spirit. In this we see benighted minds enlightened, stubborn wills subdued, hard hearts opened, melted, broken, and changed; and all in opposition to the de-

pravity of man, the allurements of the world, and the wiles of the wicked one. And all this variously by the word of truth. Here again we see the power of God gaining victories over the prince of darkness. For while Satan, the god of this world, blinds the minds of those who believe not, by means of the world; the God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines by means of the word in the hearts of those who believe. The exceeding greatness of God's power towards those who believe is in some measure according to the working of the might of his power which he wrought in Christ Jesus when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenlies. Thus the weapons of the gospel warfare are not fleshly, but powerful, powerful for God to the pulling down of strongholds; and thus those who employ these weapons in harmony with their spiritual nature, are successful in casting down reasonings, and every high thing which exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

3d, Seeing the glory of God's power in the work of Christ and in the work of the holy Spirit, in the mediation of the Son and in the regeneration of the sinner, we see the glory of the gospel and the glory of Christ in being the power of God unto the salvation of every one who believeth. Be their sins ever so many, yet, as we have already seen, the gospel is power to take them away. Be their guilt ever so great, upon believing in Jesus, the gospel is power to their justification. Be

their minds ever so benighted and their hearts ever so hard, the gospel is power to their regeneration. Be their souls sunk ever so deep in the horrible pit and miry clay of sin and wretchedness, the gospel is power to lift them out of the pit, to set their feet upon a rock, upon the rock of God's truth, and to establish their goings. Thus the glory of God's power in the gospel is seen in the power of his Son by his atoning blood, bringing guilty souls back to his friendship; and in the power of his Spirit by his holy word bringing depraved souls back to his likeness; and in the power of his Almighty arm saving them from the second death and endless fire, and raising them to eternal life and endless glory.

As God has so magnified his power in the cross of Christ, let all see to it that they magnify that power by looking to the cross. Call not the cross weakness, seeing that it has been reared by the hand of wisdom and love, but look to it and live. Thus you will not, cannot perish. Thus you will be saved with an everlasting salvation.

3. The glory of holiness in the gospel.

The holiness of God, consisting in his absolute freedom from sin, and his deep hatred to it, and exhibited in all his moral government, is nowhere so gloriously illustrated as in the gospel. This is observable in the emotions of God towards sin and the sinner; in the necessary spotlessness of the atonement; and in the holy tendencies of every department of the plan.

1st, Two grand elements of holiness are seen in this —that the purpose of God to save man is a wonderful combination of two opposite motives—hatred and love; the keenest hatred of sin and the warmest love to the sinner. While God was bent on saving sinners, he could not save them in their sins. The gospel knows no salvation which does not begin and end with deliverance from sin. The salvation of man was possible only by the destruction of sin. Man can again be the friend of God only as he becomes and remains the foe of sin. Those sinners therefore alone can be saved in whom sin is overcome and at length destroyed. Matt. i. 21; Gal. 1. 4; Tit. ii. 14.

2d, Holiness is both demanded and found in the sacrifice essential to atonement for sin. While from the nature of God and of sin it follows that no sacrifice having sin could avail for it, here is the glory of the propitiation provided in the gospel, that it is of a lamb without blemish and without spot. The spotlessness of the Mediator meets all the demands arising from the purity of God and of his law. It is one of the gospel's brightest glories that Jesus, the propitiation for sin, knew not sin, and thereby was fitted to become sin for us, that we might become God's righteousness in him. 2 Cor. v. 21; 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

3d, Holiness is seen in all the tendencies of the gospel. While the gospel could not save man, if it did not make him holy, here is its glory that all its facts and doctrines, all its precepts and institutions, all its promises and predictions, tend to holiness. Nothing

makes so holy. Indeed, to man holiness is unattainable without the gospel. Nothing works sanctification so powerfully as the gospel plan of justification. Nothing works hatred to sin and love to God so thoroughly as God's hatred to sin and love to the sinner, seen in the sacrifice of his own beloved Son. Hence the power of Christ's cross to draw the sinner away from sin and bring him back to God. Hence the twofold power of the gospel, both to restore the sinner to God's friendship and favour, and to stamp anew God's image and likeness on his soul; to cleanse him from sin through Christ's blood, and to keep him from sin through Christ's spirit, Rom. viii. 1–4. But of this again. As God has magnified his holiness so gloriously in the gospel; as he has so remarkably shown his hatred to sin and love to the sinner, in providing an unblemished sacrifice for sin in the person of Jesus; and as all the gospel is holiness; let us see to it that we show our hatred to sin by cheerful faith and willing obedience.

4. The glory of righteousness or justice in the gospel.

It is one of the brightest glories of the gospel that it so remarkably shows Jehovah to be "a just God and a Saviour." The glory of God's justice is seen in the necessity of an atonement for sin in order to the satisfaction of justice and the possibility of the sinner's escape; in the demand of faith in the atonement in order to the benefit; in the justification of those who believe and the condemnation of those who reject. Thus,

while justice is seen in untarnished majesty punishing sin, it is seen in milder grandeur accompanying mercy in opening up a way of pardon and escape for the sinner.

1st, Mark the glory of God's righteousness in demanding satisfaction for sin in order to the release of the sinner. We ask, and we put it to the conscience of any one to answer, Would it have been honourable, would it have been just in God to pardon sin, to acquit sinners, to restore rebels to his friendship, and to their former enjoyments, without any regard to the claims of law or the rights of justice? In other words, was it possible for mercy to flow to man without a righteous medium; that is, without a propitiation? As God is righteous, he could not treat the ungodly as righteous; he could not receive into his friendship those who had broken his law, without some honourable ground of acquittal, some befitting satisfaction to his justice, some adequate honour to his holy law. Such is the nature of God that his wrath and curse must rest upon sin. Unless, therefore, the sin be taken away, the sinner must bear the wrath and curse for ever. The sinner himself cannot take away sin, for the wages of sin being death, the wages of the sinner must be death for ever. But here is the glory of God's righteousness in the gospel. Justice admits of suretyship; and in the person of God's beloved Son Jesus Christ, a surety is found, who, being the Word, and therefore having no sin, and becoming flesh, and therefore able to die for sin, becomes a propitiation,

and offers up himself a sacrifice, dying, "the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God." In his dying, justice obtains ample satisfaction for the sins of men; and now, sin being atoned for, the sinner may return to God—the way of pardon is paved, the door of mercy stands open. In Christ's work, God in righteousness and mercy has provided a fountain for the cleansing and a robe for the clothing of guilty men. Here, then, is the glory of the gospel, that the justice of God is glorified and his law honoured in so costly a ransom as God's own Son, in order to the honourable release and safe acquittal of transgressors. The Son of God honours his Father's law, and magnifies his Father's justice in his obedience unto death in order to our justification unto life, more than if the entire race of man had been destroyed.

2d, We see the glory of the justice of God in not only demanding an atonement for sin, but also faith in the atonement in order to the escape of the sinner. Were this view of faith more regarded—were faith seen to be the demand of justice as much as the atonement, —one of the great objections to a limited provision would vanish; Christians would more readily see that the demand of justice is not the release of those for whom Christ died, but faith in Christ's death in order to release. And every one may see that this is the tenor and purport of every gospel statement, and the demand stated or understood in every gospel call. In this we see the righteousness of God in the gospel to be glorious, that it is a righteousness by faith. Hence,

while works are not reckoned unto righteousness as in the law, yet it is not nothing which is reckoned unto righteousness in the gospel, it is faith in the Son of God. It would not be reasonable nor righteous, it would not be honourable nor wise, yea, it would not be possible, to justify a sinner through nothing. Seeing, then, that works are set aside, faith in the righteousness of Christ as the surety of man is the demand of justice—a demand which, being in accordance with reason, surrounds the gospel plan with a halo of glory. As the very nature of things demands that God and the sinner be of one mind towards sin and the Saviour, it necessarily follows, that while provision is made for the whole family of man, those only can obtain the benefit who fall in with the arrangement.

3d, Justice is seen to be glorious in not only demanding satisfaction for sin, and faith in that satisfaction, but also in justifying those who believe, and in condemning those who refuse. Hence, not only is God just in justifying him who believeth in Jesus, but his justice in this is magnified; and not only is he just in condemning to everlasting death those who believe not, but in so doing his justice is glorified. Not only is God righteous, but his righteousness is glorious in treating as righteous the sinner in whom he sees Jesus the righteous one, and on whom he sees the garment of salvation, the righteous robe. And equally righteous is he, glorious in holiness and fearful in praises, when, to the gospel hearer or church member who prefers his own filthy rags, he will say, "Friend, how camest thou

in hither, not having a wedding-garment?" and when to his servants the holy angels he will say, "Bind him hand and foot and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." From all these things we are led to see the meaning of that wonderful combination, "a just God and a Saviour," a combination fitted to inspire fear where there is not faith, to encourage the soul burdened with sin, and to strengthen and increase the faith of the believer. Isa. xlv. 21, 22.

As God has magnified his righteousness so gloriously in providing a righteous surety, and demanding faith in the surety, in order to the righteousness of the guilty, let all see to it that they magnify the righteousness of God by their ready compliance with this righteous and gracious arrangement. Never forget that God will glorify his righteousness in you whatever course you take; but that your eternal happiness depends upon your own choice. Believe in Jesus, and God will honour his justice in your justification and eternal life. Refuse, and God will honour his justice in your condemnation unto endless fire. Having your choice of life, why will ye die?

5. The glory of truth or faithfulness in the gospel.

This gospel glory is seen in the continued regard which the whole arrangement has to the original threatening of death as the fruit of Adam's sin; in sending the seed of the woman; in fulfilling the promise of life to

all who flee to Jesus, and the threatening of death to all who refuse.

1st, The glory of God's faithfulness is seen in the continued regard which the whole arrangement has to the original threatening, Gen. ii. 17. The Allmighty having told our first parents that death would be the consequence of their eating the forbidden fruit, could not fail to keep his word. Hence on that very day, death began its work. Death came into the world by sin, and it has come upon all men, for all have sinned. Thus far God's word has been fulfilled. But as he had not said, this death would be everlasting, a door was left open, guarded by justice and truth, into which mercy might enter, and bring man from death unto life. According to righteousness, this could be only by one of sufficient dignity and spotless purity entering through this door into the domains of death, on behalf of the race. Hence God in his boundless love has graciously given up his own Son, that mercy in his person might enter, and by his death open up a way by which man might be saved, first from spiritual death, in the deliverance of the soul from sin, and then from temporal death, in the resurrection of the body from the grave. In this the truth of God is glorious, that mankind dies temporally for Adam's sin, and Jesus Christ dies temporally for the sins of men, in order to save them from dying eternally for their own sins. Here we see how the truth of God, as well as his justice, rendered death necessary in order to deliverance from death; the death of one in order to the life of the race.

2d, The truth of God in the gospel is glorified in the fulfilment of his predictions and promises relative to the salvation of mankind in the person and work of his Son, Gen. iii. 15. As Joshua said of Israel's redemption from Egypt and possession of Canaan, so we may say of the redemption wrought by the Son of God, "There hath not failed ought of any good thing which Jehovah hath spoken; all has come to pass." According to his word, the seed of the woman has come and bruised the serpent's head, while the serpent has bruised his heel.

3d, The glory of God's truth in the gospel is seen in the bestowment of eternal life on all who believe in Jesus, John iii. 36. As he has promised the forgiveness of sins, adoption into his family, the gift of his holy Spirit, a crown of glory, and every gospel blessing to all who avail themselves of the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, every soul which has fled to Jesus can seal that God is true. Their joyful witness is, "God is faithful who hath promised." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

4th, The truth of God in the gospel is glorified in the fulfilment of eternal death and every threatening to unbelief and unbelievers. There is not one who rejects Christ who has his sins pardoned. There is not one who neglects the great salvation, but, according to the word which the unlying God hath spoken, he perishes for ever, Heb. ii. 1–3; Rev. xxi. 7, 8.

These thoughts present a glorious prospect before

the believer in Jesus, and a doom of dreadful darkness before the unbeliever. God is love, and not willing that one should perish; but his purposes are fixed, his plans are unalterable, and his word cannot pass unfulfilled. His faithfulness in the first threatening and the first promise assures us of his faithfulness in the other two. As there is not one who has not had to leave this world on account of Adam's sin, and as the seed of the woman has come and bruised the serpent's head in dying for the race, so there is not one shut out of heaven believing in Jesus, or saved from hell-fire in unbelief. As God has already magnified his word for the sake of all his name, be assured he will magnify it still. As he thus magnifies, and thereby glorifies his truth, let every one do the same. It is the part of faith to honour faithfulness. Let us honour the faithfulness of God by receiving and relying on every word he hath spoken. And be assured that, as in so doing you honour God, God will honour you.

6. The glory of mercy, grace, and love in the gospel.

While all the name of God shines with surpassing brightness in the salvation of man, yet the pre-eminence belongs to mercy, because it is peculiarly a purpose of love, a plan of grace. The glories herein displayed are now to engage our thoughts. Among many others, there are three on which we would more fully dwell—namely, sovereignty, richness, and freeness.

1st, The grace of God in the gospel is glorious be-

cause of its sovereignty. Grace is favour. The grace of God towards mankind is his favour towards the race, notwithstanding its rebellion. We love the word *grace*, although sometimes the word *favour* is plainer and clearer. And we still more love the words *sovereign grace*. This is the fountain-head of redemption, the mainspring of all the movements of the gospel plan. And as grace is the leading ingredient in the waters of the fountain, the same grace enriches all the streams of salvation.

> "Grace first contrived a way to save rebellious man,
> And all the steps that grace display, which drew the
> wondrous plan."

The reign of grace is a glorious field of Christian contemplation. "Grace reigneth through righteousness unto eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." This grace is sovereign, because above law. When man sinned, God might have been determined to show no favour, but at once and for ever to destroy the race. Having of his own good will created, he had a perfect right to continue it or not as he pleased. Having threatened death in case of sin, he might have made the death eternal. As man did not abide by the will of his Maker, he had no reason to look for anything but the immediate and perpetual withdrawal of a forfeited life. God was under no obligation to spare man; the race had no claim to mercy. When God, therefore, took pity, and resolved to spare and to save, his purpose was necessarily of grace, free, rich, sovereign grace. All that God has done for sinful man is, as the apostle

again and again expresses it, "according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace,"—"according to his good pleasure which he purposed in himself;" "that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness towards us, through Christ Jesus; for by grace are ye saved, through faith; and this, the gift of God, is not of you; not of works; that no one might boast," Efes. i. 5, 6, 9, ii. 7–9.

2d, The grace of God in the gospel is glorious because of its richness. The love of God to mankind is unspeakable, being a height and a depth, a breadth and a length which passeth knowledge. As this love was great, so great is its glory. The glory of God is, doubtless, to be seen in destruction as well as in salvation; but while both are a great deep, salvation is to us much clearer. There is, doubtless, wisdom in both; but in salvation there is love as well as wisdom. And as the salvation of man is a great salvation, worthy of a God, at a great cost, and attended with great results, it displays the greatness of his favour.

3d, The grace of God in the gospel is glorious because of the freeness of his mercy. God's mercy is not merely pity for the miserable, but pity for those who have made themselves miserable, and who therefore deserve to suffer the due reward of their deeds. It is the glory of mercy that in its very nature it is sovereign, being independent of law, and may therefore be shown or not according to the good pleasure of the ruler. But from the nature of mind and of sin, the

mercy of God must have terms on which alone it can be enjoyed. Hence we read, "I will have mercy on whom I may have mercy." It is the glory of the gospel that the terms of God's mercy are in accordance with the occasion and the necessities of man's misery. The occasion is sin; the necessity salvation. What then are the terms but the abandonment of sin and the reception of the only Saviour? Any one who has eyes to see may see that on no other condition could mercy be shown. Hence those glorious words, "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him turn to Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God for he will abundantly pardon." And those other glorious words, "Through Jesus is declared to you the forgiveness of sins; and in him every one who believeth is justified from all things." Thus, while we are saved by grace, it is through faith.

These being the terms of mercy, the question arises, To whom are they available? Here is the glory, Mercy is free; free to all, and nothing to pay.

(1.) Mercy is free, for there is no respect of persons with God. Loving the race, he wishes all to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth; he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. By himself he swears, "As I live, saith Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that he turn from his ways and live." Yea, he beseeches the sinner to give up his sins and live. "Turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways. Why will

ye die?" All nations, accordingly, are welcome to the salvation of Jesus Christ; all ranks, all characters, and therefore every man, woman, and child, on the face of the earth. As we have already seen, "the righteousness of God which is by faith in Jesus Christ is unto all, for there is no difference, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." "There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all who call upon him; for every one who shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

(2.) Mercy is free, for there is nothing to pay, nothing to suffer, no works, no merits. While mercy has terms—repentance and faith—yet, from its very nature, it shuts out the idea of merit or price. Hence the calls of the gospel, being the calls of mercy, are all free. Hence salvation is not of ourselves, but of grace; and being of grace it is a gift, the gift of God; and being a gift, it must be free. Who has to pay for a gift? Hence it is through faith, and not of works, that no one might boast. Mercy asks no money. Mercy is not needed where there is merit. Mercy requires no suffering; its very name is the antidote and the absence of misery. Listen to its calls. Is there a word of merit? "Come now, let us reason together, saith Jehovah. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Is there a word of money? There is, but to show the sinner that it is not the price of mercy, "Ho every one that thirsteth,

come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come, buy and eat; yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." It is not the province of mercy to get, but to give; it is not the part of the miserable to give, but to take. Yes, take, O sinner, and take freely—take for nothing. Now, in all this there is glory, unspeakable glory, the glory of mercy, grace, and love. We see the glory of goodness throughout creation, waving in every leaf and shining in every star; but brighter far is the glory of mercy to sinful man, in providing a Saviour, in pardoning iniquity, and passing by transgression. Who can describe the gorgeousness of that glory which shines in the love of God, reflected in the cross of Christ, thereby raising millions of millions of intelligent beings to boundless bliss and endless joy?

As God has magnified his mercy so gloriously in providing salvation, let all see to it that they magnify mercy in accepting salvation. Be assured that the greater the mercy you neglect, the greater the misery you endure; and the greater the mercy you receive, the greater the blessing you enjoy.

Having seen the gospel to be glorious, because in it we have the fullest unfolding and the brightest beauty of the perfections of God, we now advance to our next position.

3. The gospel is glorious because in it we behold the perfections of God in perfect harmony.

1st, From the nature of God as a perfect being it follows that he can do nothing in opposition to any

one of his attributes; in other words, he can do nothing against himself. God, unlike man, is always consistent; whatever he says or does must be like himself. Thus, if we glance at his various attributes, it must be clear to all that his wisdom could never desire an end at variance with his holiness and righteousness; his unchangeableness could not fail to ensure the accomplishment of every one of his purposes and plans, promises and threatenings. Conflict in the mind of God is impossible. Unlike man, his will can never struggle with his judgment; the heart of the father can never wrestle with the mind of the judge. It is true, there are some scriptures in which the Allmighty expresses his fatherlike reluctance to punish Israel, while at the same time their sins demand and necessitate the rod. But in these scriptures there is no intimation of conflict. They contain no hint of the desire of mercy to forego the claims of justice. They do not exhibit the father as inclined to wink at the sins of the child; but as grieved that the child should so act as to necessitate vengeance. And what right-minded father would not feel the same? Yea, even the judge and the ruler having a heart tender towards sinning, suffering men, will have like feelings in the execution of justice. With these reflections let us read two of the scriptures referred to. While relating to Israel, we take them as an expression of the feelings of God towards sinners in general; showing that he has no pleasure in punishing the workers of iniquity, however great their guilt.

"How shall I give thee up, Efraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel?
How shall I make thee as Admah? How shall I set thee as Zeboim?
Mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together.
I will not execute the fierceness of mine anger, I will not return to destroy Efraim:
For I am God and not man;
The Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."—Hosea xi. 8, 9.

"Is Efraim, my dear son, a pleasant child?
For since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still;
Therefore my bowels are troubled for him:
I will surely have mercy upon him, saith Jehovah."—Jer. xxxi. 20.

In these scriptures, mercy and justice, the father and the judge, are in perfect harmony. At the same time they afford a glorious view of the tenderness of God in the punishment of sin. As a holy and righteous judge, he must execute wrath; yet it is to him strange work, foreign from his mind, not agreeable to his heart, because he delighteth in mercy.

2d, Such being the harmony of God's perfections in the punishment of sin, and his general government of man, we might expect the same to be still more fully seen in the plan of salvation. And so it is. In the rescue of man from sin and ruin, we see love desiring, justice demanding, wisdom planning, power fulfilling, truth promising, justice satisfied, unchangeableness abiding by every purpose, plan, and promise. But in the whole there is not the ripple of a wave, nor the rising of a surge, but the smooth, unruffled flow of the waters of salvation in the river of life which goeth forth from the throne of God. In our little dark

minds we may imagine something like a struggle in the mind of God, when mercy, desiring the redemption of mankind from the threatening of death, justice demanded satisfaction and sacrifice; and still more when the only available propitiation was God's own beloved and only begotten Son. The feelings of a father towards the Lord Jesus might well be supposed to pause for a moment before surrendering him to become a man and a victim to lay down his life for the sins of men. But such a struggle and such a pause exist only in our narrow minds, in our low creeping imaginations. They could have no place in the boundless mind of Jehovah, who sees the end from the beginning. Attempted representations of the kind we deem no honour to God, and therefore we dislike them, however ingenious, beautiful, or sublime.

In Scripture we have some exquisite views of the harmony of the divine names in the ways of God with men; views which meet with their brightest and fullest illustration in the salvation of Jesus Christ.

"Surely his salvation is nigh to those who fear him;
That glory may dwell in our land.
Mercy and truth are met together;
Righteousness and peace have kissed each other.
Truth shall spring out of the earth;
And righteousness shall look down from heaven," &c.
—Ps. lxxxv. 9–13.

"Thou hast an arm with might:
Strong is thy hand, high is thy right hand.
Justice and judgment are the establishment of thy throne:
Mercy and truth shall go before thy face.
Happy the people who know the joyful sound:

Jehovah, in the light of thy countenance they shall walk.
In thy name shall they rejoice every day;
And in thy righteousness shall they be high."—Ps. lxxxix. 13–16.

Where did mercy and truth, righteousness and peace, more awfully and gloriously meet and embrace than at the cross of Christ? And in what joyful sound did justice and judgment, mercy and truth, ever more wonderfully blend than in the glad tidings of salvation for men through the Son of God? Here then is a soul-cheering truth, fitted to allay all the doubts and fears of the anxious seeker for salvation. All the perfections and attributes of the Allmighty join in providing and ensuring the salvation of men through the atonement of Christ. In the pardon of sin we see justice combining with faithfulness. "For if we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Thus the gospel is glorious, because it is a revelation of the brightest glories of the perfections of God; and this as seen in their fullest unfolding, their greatest lustre, and their perfect harmony.

Two grand and important lessons we learn from these reflections.

1. Let no one trust to the mercy of God who neglects the atonement of Christ, in which justice has been satisfied. From the harmony of the divine attributes none need look for the mercy of God who does not yield to the righteousness of God which is by faith in Christ.

2. Let no one doubt God's mercy, or dread God's

justice, who believes in Jesus. As in him justice is satisfied, and through him mercy flows, therefore in him the soul is safe.

II. THE GOSPEL UNVEILS TO OUR EYES MORE OF THE WONDERS AND GLORIES OF THE GODHEAD THAN ANY OTHER OF THE WAYS OF GOD KNOWN TO MAN.

Here is a twofold glory,—combined and distinctive.

1. The combined glory of the Godhead in saving man, Isa. xlii. 1, lxi. 1.

In the Godhead we see Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and in the gospel we see them one in the redemption of man. It is glorious, not only to behold the Father and the Son and the Spirit one as God, as having in common the divine nature; but also to behold the Father and the Son and the Spirit one in this great undertaking. There is a kind of teaching or a manner of speaking which gives rise to the thought of a possible difference between Father, Son, and Spirit, in the salvation of man; as if, for example, the love of the Son were greater than the love of the Father. Such a difference we hold to be an impossibility in the very nature of things and of God. As the apostle Paul says of the gifts of the primitive church, so we may say of the work of the Godhead in the plan of salvation:—There are differences of endowments, of ministrations, and of workings; but in all it is the same Spirit, and the same Lord, and the same God, who worketh all things in all things, 1 Cor. xii. 4–6. As

in the very nature of the Godhead there is and must be a difference between the Father and the Son and the Spirit, otherwise words have no meaning; so in the salvation of man, as in the creation of the world, there is, and there must be a difference of workings. The Father does not, and cannot do the work of the Son; nor the Son, the work of the Father, or of the Spirit. Yet, in the doing of the work, the Father, Son, and Spirit, are one; the same mind and heart and will, the same end and aim. There can be no difference, therefore, between the love of the Father and of the Son; it is the love of the one Spirit which is common to the Godhead. In all this we see glory, unspeakable glory. But let us notice—

2. The distinctive glory of Father, Son, and Spirit, in saving man.

(1.) The glory of the Father in the gospel is seen in what we have already endeavoured to show regarding the divine perfections as therein displayed in their fuller unfolding, their brighter lustre, their perfect harmony. The glory of the Father is farther seen in this, that as he is the first and last of all things in creation, so in redemption. He is the source of the whole; all originated with him. "All these things are from God, who hath reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ." The glory of the Father is seen in his eternal purpose which he purposed in himself; in his matchless plans, which by degrees he unfolded to view in the promises and predictions, institutions and dispensations of the Old and New Testaments; but, above

all, in his amazing love to the race of man in sending his only begotten Son, and giving him up to die in order to save the lost. As the apostle John says, "In this is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins." Some speak as if the death of Christ extinguished the wrath of God, and procured his love. As well tell us that the stream supplies and enriches the fountain. The reverse is the truth. It was the love, the eternal love, the sovereign grace, the fatherlike compassion of the everlasting Jehovah, which procured the atonement of Jesus in order to rescue sin-ruined man. The very nature of the case might teach us that it could not be otherwise. And in the whole train and strain of Christ's own teaching he conveys the same lesson; showing that he was not only the Son, but also the messenger and the servant of the Father. "Verily, verily, I say to you, the Son can do nothing from himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also the Son doeth likewise." But nothing could be clearer than those words in which he calls his own death his Father's commandment. "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life that I might receive it again. None taketh it from me, but I lay it down from myself. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to receive it again. This commandment have I received from my Father." And hence, "the Father is glorified in the Son." Here, then, we see the glory of the Father, that as he is the first cause and last end, the

maker and mover of all things, he is the first cause and last end, the author and mover of the deliverance of mankind.

(2.) The glory of the Son in the gospel is seen in his entire childlike devotedness to the will and the glory of his Father. He had no will of his own, no inclination in the smallest matter to swerve from his Father's will. He was willing to become, to be and do, to say and suffer, whatever his Father saw good in the accomplishment of his mission to our world. See Isa. l. 4–9. The burden of his song, when he came skipping over the mountains, and leaping upon the hills which lay in his way, was "Lo, I come to do thy will. In the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is in the midst of my heart." And when nearing the end of his journey on earth, he could say to his Father, "I have glorified thee on the earth, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." The whole of the Saviour's work, from first to last, is glorious. Glory shines on all his path from heaven to earth, from the cradle to the cross, from the manger of Bethlehem to the Mount of Olives, from earth to heaven again. The glory of Adam in Eden, and of Moses on Sina, were but faint shadows and fleeting clouds compared with the glory of the Sun of Righteousness with healing in his wings. The combination of meekness and majesty, of the servant and the Son, the Saviour and the Sovereign, the teacher and the Lord—aye, of the man and the God—in all his words and all his ways, presents a

glory "such as earth saw never, such as heaven stooped down to see." Think of his glory in coming down to earth, and walking among men, the image of the invisible God in the likeness of men, all in order to restore man to the friendship and likeness of God. Think of his glory as one, and the only one, in the middle between God and man, a mediator, a profet, a priest and a king; to teach, to atone, and to rule; all in order to bring man back to God. The lowly guise, the unworldliness of the Saviour's entire position, and doings, and aim; his poverty and privations, his sufferings and death, as well as his marvellous and supernatural resurrection and ascension, render his whole life unique, and set forth the glory of his character and goings with a brilliance dazzling, and a majesty divine, to which there is no comparison. Such is but a faint and feeble view of the glory of the Son of God in the salvation of man. "It is the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

(3.) The glory of the Holy Spirit of God in the gospel is seen in supernatural endowments and gracious influences. In the former we see the Spirit revealing the mind of God, and inspiring the minds of men, so as to form the complete code of Scripture which we now have in our hands, as a light to our feet and a lamp to our paths, to guide us through a world of darkness, to the abodes of sinless purity and bliss. In the latter we see the same Spirit unveiling the eyes, opening the hearts, subduing the wills, renewing the minds, regenerating the natures, and sanctifying the

souls of men; striving with them, bringing them to Jesus, turning them from sin, leading them to God, keeping them in grace, and meetening them for glory. What adds to the glory of all this, where the Son of God is received, the Spirit of God becomes an inhabitant of the same heart; as a seal stamping on the renewed soul the likeness of God, which is the impress of sonship; and as an earnest pledging the enjoyment of the everlasting inheritance which is awaiting every soul of Adam's race who receives Christ in him the hope of glory, 2 Pet. i. 21; Tit. iii. 4–7.

Thus we see the combined glory of the Godhead, and the distinctive glory of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in the salvation of man; and thus the gospel unveils to our view more of the wonders and glories of the Godhead than any other of the ways of God known to man.

1. The gospel thus viewed in relation to the Godhead is fitted to harmonise the people of God regarding the extent or limitations of grace. If we limit the love of God to the church, then consistency requires us to limit to the same extent the death of Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit, as these are the expressions of God's love. But if we understand the love of God to be world-wide, so also the death of Christ and the work of the Spirit. With John iii. 16, and many other scriptures we can reach no other conclusion. Being assured of the love of God in giving a Saviour to die for all men, we may be assured he will not withhold that teaching, without which none can

come to this Saviour. "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

2. This view of the gospel is fitted much to cheer and encourage the anxious soul. Come, for all things are ready.

3. This view of the gospel is an aggravation of the sin and guilt of unbelief. Think, O sinner, that in neglecting the great salvation you are guilty of awful sin against the Godhead. You are guilty of despising the love of God, of treading his Son under foot, and of withstanding and grieving his holy Spirit. How can you escape, persisting in crimes so dreadful?

III. THE GOSPEL BRINGS MORE HONOUR AND GLORY TO THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD THAN ANY OTHER ARRANGEMENT KNOWN TO MAN.

"*Jehovah is pleased for the sake of his righteousness; because he hath magnified the law and honoured it.*"—Isa. xlii. 21.

1. If righteousness were the character of all rulers, it would follow that righteousness would be the character of all rule, and, therefore, of all laws. No law would be made which would not be worthy of being magnified and honoured. Glorious would be the condition of all lands were this the universal feature of human governments. Amid the mysteries of providence, it is our joy to know that this is a feature of the government of God.

2. The government which has righteous laws, ought

jealously to uphold its honour, and to magnify its appointments. Such should be the government of a father in his house, of a master in his establishment, of magistrates in a city, and of the chief ruler in a land. And shall earthly authorities, with whom there is a woeful lack of justice and goodwill, be jealous of their honour and their prerogatives; and at the same time the chief ruler of the universe allow his laws to be disobeyed or slighted without visitation? It cannot be. All his commandments are faithfulness and righteousness. "The law is holy, the commandment holy, righteous and good." And Jehovah is a jealous God; he taketh vengeance, and will by no means clear the guilty.

3. Accordingly the honour of God's government must be upheld. Whatever is necessary to it he will do; and whatever is contrary, he will disown and punish. As Jehovah is God, the ruler and owner of all, he cannot fail to magnify and honour his law; he must keep his word, he must see his word kept by others. He is not to be trifled with by any creature which he has made. Whatever he says, they must believe; whatever he bids, they must obey; whatever he forbids, they must avoid. Were God to issue a law, and promise a blessing to the obedient, and threaten punishment to the disobedient, and at the same time pass by and take no notice whether it were obeyed or not, what would be the result? His word would be broken, his name dishonoured, his authority slighted, his laws, promises, and threatenings set at nought. But all this is impossible with God. Not a word which

he hath spoken will return to him void. Every promise and every threatening will be performed. And this is the honour and glory of the Allmighty. Jehovah is pleased thus to rule for the sake of his righteousness, because he will magnify and honour his law.

4. These principles of government are seen in all the dispensations which have existed from the creation of men until now. All along God has variously shown his determination to be honoured and obeyed. This we see in the doom of our first parents, and in Noah's flood, in the confusion of Babel and the destruction of Sodom, in the gradual bewilderment of the nations as they departed from the worship of the true God, in the overthrow of the Egyptians and the extermination of the Canaanites, and in the awful calamities which again and again befell Israel and Judah. In all these, and thousands of other cases, God has shown himself to be a ruler, who, while good and long suffering, yet will not be trifled with.

5. In none of the dispensations have these principles been more wonderfully illustrated than in the gospel: a position which we will endeavour to establish from the following considerations,—

1st, From the nature of God, deliverance for man was impossible without honour to the government of God. If man's salvation could be only at the expense of God's honour or the honour of his law, then there had been no salvation for him. Had these been alternatives, the Allmighty could not have hesitated for one moment; the race must have perished for ever.

2d, It is our joy to know that by the gospel plan both ends are secured. Herein is salvation for the human family, and hereby fresh honour to the government of God. It is one of the glories of the gospel, that in it every word which God hath spoken is fulfilled; in it his promises and threatenings are all accomplished; in it his word is magnified because of all his name, his law is magnified and honoured for the sake of his righteousness.

3d, How these two ends are accomplished it is for us to show. In considering the wonders of the gospel plan, some interesting questions rise to the mind, an examination of which will tend to illustrate the honour of God's government as upheld by the gospel. As, for example, Why God, who has all power, has not saved man without sacrifice, without suffering, without death; without the suffering, sacrifice, and death of one in the room of others; of the innocent instead of the guilty; of his own beloved Son instead of sinful men? In other words, Why death should be the means of life? Why the death of the Lord Jesus Christ was necessary to the life of the children of men? That it was necessary is evident from two facts, namely, that it is God's own arrangement, and that we never find him using any means unnecessary to accomplish an end. The question here is, Why was it necessary? These interesting inquiries we deem answered by the following considerations:—

(1.) Suffering and death being the natural and necessary consequences of sin, it follows that where sin is

suffering and death must be. We do not say, there is no suffering, no death, where there is no sin. What we say is, that there is no sin without suffering and death. This is the arrangement and the decree of God, as stated in the well-known words of Ezekiel and Paul, "The soul which sinneth, it shall die." "The wages of sin is death."

(2.) From this arrangement it follows, that in every case either the sinner must suffer and die for himself, or one who is not a sinner must suffer and die for him. Should no one be found to do so, he must die for himself, there being no salvation for the sinner without death for the sin.

(3.) This arrangement accounts for the threatening made to Adam: "In the day thou eatest of it, dying thou shalt die." Men are apt to imagine that the sentence might have been otherwise; that it might have been less than death. Those who see that sin is wandering from God, the fountain of life, will see that, in the very nature of things, sin leads to death, and therefore the threatening could not have been otherwise.

(4.) From this it follows, either that the threatening must have taken its course on both body and soul, and therefore for ever, and the whole race have perished in Adam and Eve; or that one should undertake to stay the course of death by himself dying for the race thus doomed to die. In no other way could God's word stand, and at the same time the race be preserved from everlasting destruction.

(5.) Again, the inseparableness of sin and death gives rise to another necessity, namely, salvation from sin,—as well as death for sin, in order to salvation from everlasting death. Hence, while one dies for the race, those only are saved from death who are saved from sin. In the nature of God and of sin it could not be otherwise.

(6.) How all this has been met in Christ is manifest to those who know the glorious gospel of the happy God.

(1st,) The government and law of God were honoured in this, that Christ, becoming the surety of man, was made a man, and so made under the law; and that on the one hand he yielded perfect obedience to the law, and on the other took our sin upon him by taking upon him suffering and death for us. Thus, by an atonement for man's breach of the law, he satisfied the justice of God, and stayed the course of death, and opened up a way of escape equally sure to the lawbreaker, and honourable to the lawgiver. While law and justice and the nature of things demand death for sin, Christ, by answering the demand, magnifies and honours the law, and opens the door of life for sinners. Thus, while the death of Christ is a special and singular arrangement of God's grace, it is in perfect harmony with the general arrangement of his providence; namely, to preserve life and stay death by means of death. Thus, as bodily life is preserved by means of death in the vegetable and animal kingdoms, eternal life is restored to men through the death of the Son of

God. In both cases, also, the death is substitutionary; death endured by one in order that life may be enjoyed by others. There is another law in the vegetable kingdom which also illustrates the death of Christ; namely, that many living spring from one dying. To this analogy Jesus himself points, in order to show the necessity of his own death and burial to the life of men. "Unless a corn of wheat fall into the ground and be dead, it abideth alone; but if it be dead, it bringeth forth much fruit," John xii. 23, 24. Thus, as the death of one grain in the ground is the life of all which spring from it, the death of Christ is the life of all who believe in him.

(2d,) The government and law of God are further honoured in this, that not only is the course of death stayed by the death of Christ, but also the course of sin. Hence the death of Christ for man becomes the death of sin in man. Death for sin becomes the death of sin, and thereby the death of death, and the life of holiness, and the life of the sinner. Hence those who believe in Jesus are not only justified, but also sanctified through faith in his death. Hence, while there is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, they who are in Christ Jesus walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus frees them from the law of death, because it frees them from the law of sin. Thus, the righteousness of the law is seen in the atonement, and fulfilled in those who believe, walking by the power of the truth and of the Spirit and of faith, in holiness and

obedience, not according to the flesh which they have put off, but according to the holy Spirit by which they are led, Rom. viii. 1–4. In all this we see glory worthy of God, wonderfully displaying his wisdom and goodness, his holiness and righteousness; his wisdom in a plan by which his mercy might flow to the sinner, and his righteousness be magnified in death for sin, and his holiness in the death of sin. In securing all this, mark the wonders of his wisdom in working by contraries. Who would have thought that life was to be restored by death, the life of many by the death of one, the life of the children of men by the death of the Son of God? Yet so it is. Who would have thought that death for sin would have become the life of sinners by becoming the death of sin, and working the life of God in the soul? Yet so it is. And thus we see how "it became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."

(3d,) The government and law of God are honoured in this, that the gospel has become a new edition of the law, and thus a standard of right thought and action to all mankind. Hence it may be said that all which the law of God requires of men is to be found republished in the New Testament, as set forth in the teaching of our Lord and his apostles. And hence, in the last day, all men are to be judged according to the gospel. Rom. ii. 12; 1 Tim. i. 9–11.

Conclusion—

From this view of the gospel we may learn many important lessons.

1. As it is God's fixed determination to uphold the honour of his law and government, let none be found trifling with God, in treating lightly any law which he has given, any requirement which he has made. See that you make haste and delay not to keep his commandments. Ps. cxix. 60.

2. As God's law has been honoured in the sacrifice and death of his Son, let none expect to escape the punishment of his sin in any other way. Hence the necessity of faith and trust in Christ's death in order to benefit from it.

3. As Christ died for sin in order that we might die to sin, let none imagine any benefit from Christ's death unless in him this end is gained. Hence the necessity of the new life in order to the death of sin, and the new birth in order to the beginning of the new life. "You must be born again."

CHAPTER XIV.

THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL IN RELATION TO MAN.

HAVING seen that the gospel is glorious because it brings glory to God, being such a manifestation of his glory, we will now endeavour to show that it is glorious in bringing glory to man,—raising him to honour here, and fitting him for unspeakable glory hereafter.

This glory we will endeavour to show by an exhibition of the suitableness and blessings, the tendencies and results of the gospel.

I. THE GLORY OF THE GOSPEL BECAUSE OF ITS SUITABLENESS TO MAN.

One of the clearest evidences of creation being the work of a God of boundless power, wisdom and goodness, is the universal fitness of things to one another. The very same evidence shines with equal brightness in the gospel. The more we look into the condition of man on the one hand, and the leading features of the gospel on the other, the more we see its entire and glorious fitness to his case. This we shall endeavour to illustrate by showing that it is a remedy simple, complete, universal, and gratuitous, and the only remedy for the wants and woes of men.

1. The gospel is a remedy—something to heal, something to save.

It finds man diseased, morally diseased, and brings him a cure. It finds him lost, lost to God and to good, and brings him salvation. It finds him guilty of rebellion against his Maker, and brings him a pardon. It finds him in sin and therefore dead; away from God and therefore in ruins; it brings to him Jesus the Son of God a Saviour, to deliver him from sin and therefore from death, to restore him to God and therefore to everlasting life. In one word, it finds him sinking into the pit, the horrible pit of eternal woe, and in strains of mercy, and with outstretched arms of love and power, cries, "Deliver from going down to the pit, I have found a ransom." Herein indeed is glory. As Watts beautifully sings:—

"This remedy did wisdom find to heal diseases of the mind;
This sovereign balm, whose virtues can restore the ruined creature man.
The gospel bids the dead revive. Sinners obey the voice and live.
Dry bones are raised and clothed afresh, and hearts of stone are turned to flesh."

2. The gospel is a simple remedy, a remedy of great and beautiful simplicity.

The work of preparation was long and hard, yet the plan finished is short and easy. In this feature the gospel resembles the other arrangements of God, in which the complex is wonderfully combined with the simple. In its simplicity the gospel is pre-eminently fitted for man. In all things generally the simplest means are the best, and particularly in diet and in

cure. As the simplest food and the simplest cures are best for the health and the healing of the body; so is it with the mind and the soul. A scheme more complex than the gospel, like dainty dishes and mysterious medicines, might suit better the tastes and the fancies of men, but not their necessities. Seven times dipping in Jordan was in Naaman's fancy too easy a cure for a disease so dreadful as leprosy. But his pride was lowered and his rage cooled when his servants wisely and calmly asked if he would not have done some great thing had the profet bidden him. Accordingly, he went to the river and dipped as often as desired, and was made whole. A fine illustration of the simple plan of salvation through Jesus Christ; a stern rebuke of anti-christian mockeries and self-righteous notions; a beautiful lesson to the sinner who is seeking salvation from sin and hell. To all who are asking, What must we do? our reply is, Learn the A B C of the gospel. A few words sum up the whole. Man having sinned, dies. God, in his love, gave his Son Jesus to die for him, that he might not die but live for ever. This believe and you live. Could anything be more simple and plain? In the beautiful words of Cowper—

"Oh, how unlike the complex works of man,
Heaven's easy, artless, unencumbered plan;
No meretricious graces to beguile,
No clustering ornaments to clog the pile;
From ostentation, as from weakness free,
It stands like the cerulean arch you see;
Majestic in its own simplicity,
Inscribed above the portals from afar,
Conspicuous as the brightness of a star,

Legible only by the light they give,
Stand the soul-quickening words—Believe and live."

3. The gospel is a complete remedy, and glorious in its fulness and finishedness.

Those who know the gospel know that in order to man's salvation the law of God must be honoured, and the justice of God satisfied by another on his behalf; and that accordingly the Son of God having fulfilled the law in all things, laid down his life a sacrifice for the sins of men. In so doing, he met the full demands of justice, himself declaring in his last cry on the cross, "It is finished;" and his Father bearing witness by his resurrection from the dead. Had Christ not come down, man could not have been lifted up; but that is done. Had Christ not died and risen and ascended again, man could not have lived for ever and ascended to glory; but that also is done. While man therefore is so weak that he can do and suffer nothing in order to his own release from the curse of the law and the wrath of God, here is the good news of a work so complete that he has nothing to do, nothing to suffer, but only to receive with his whole heart the work accomplished on Calvary. Hence, O sinner, "the word is nigh thee, in thy heart and in thy mouth, that is, the word of faith which we preach. That if thou shalt own with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The gospel being a work finished by God himself in Christ, remember that any attempt to add to it anything of your own, is a slight

upon God and his Son; and the sure way to rob the gospel of any power to do you good. It is an attempt to alter the prescribed medicine of a wise and skilful fysician. The medicine prescribed is a certain cure, but the alteration made may be death. As a finished work, the gospel is a finished robe. By trying to join your righteousness to the righteousness of Christ, you are vainly patching a new garment with old cloth, and seeking to wear filthy rags along with a kingly robe. The attempt is alike foolish, vain, and ruinous.

"My soul, no more attempt to draw thy life and comfort from the law.
Fly to the hope the gospel gives. The man who trusts the promise lives."

4. The gospel is a universal remedy, a remedy for the whole family of man, and fitted to every sinner's case.

This glorious truth is established in the facts of the gospel roll. We see it in the love of God to the race of man; in the gift of his Son to the world; in the death of Christ for all, for every one; in the declarations that God wishes all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth, and that he is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance; in the fact that Christ who died for all charged his disciples to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. From these and other gospel truths, we learn that there is not a soul on earth which this glorious remedy cannot save from sin, and wrath, and fire; and that there is not a sinner of Adam's race who is not welcome to its blessings, and who may

not be saved through believing. Here, then, is glory, that the gospel is God's remedy for all mankind. Would any one have farther evidence, take for illustration the miracles of Jesus, and samples of those already saved. As there was no bodily ailment which Christ's power could not reach, and no disease which on application he did not cure, so his gospel is God's remedy having power to heal every spiritual disease, and to save the most hopeless soul. As by Christ while on earth, so now by his gospel, the dumb are made to speak, and the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the lame to walk, yea, lepers are cleansed, evil spirits cast out, and the dead brought to life. Such wonders of grace have been wrought by the gospel in every age. Some of the most vicious, desperate, and unlikely characters have become monuments of its heart-changing, sin-cleansing, soul-saving power. The robber on the cross, Saul of Tarsus, and the licentious Corinthians are to all succeeding ages, and to the ends of the earth, samples of its fitness for every case. Luke xxiii. 39–43; 1 Tim. i. 12–16; 1 Cor. vi. 9–11.

"While grace is offered to the prince, the poor may take his share;
No mortal hath a just pretence to perish in despair."

5. The gospel is a gratuitous remedy, being free, and glorious in its freeness.

Here is glory, that pardon and peace, acceptance with God, salvation from eternal fire, and elevation to everlasting life, are all a gift, a free gift, the gift of God to the children of men. The declaration is, that all who believe are justified freely, gratuitously, for

nothing. Hence we are taught, that while to him who worketh the reward is not a favour, but a debt, it is not so with him who believeth; his reward is a pure favour. Hence to him who worketh not but believeth, faith is counted unto righteousness; he is justified through believing in Jesus. In all this the gospel is gloriously like God, for all he gives is for nothing. In this also it is gloriously fitted for man. It is well that he needs to pay nothing, for he has nothing wherewith to pay. He is a poor helpless bankrupt whose case has been met by a kind, a mighty friend. Yet, strange to say, such is the pride of the heart, that if heaven had to be gained either by money or by merit, doubtless there would be more competitors for the prize. The gospel calls clearly set forth the freeness of its blessings. "Ho, every one who thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he who hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come and buy wine and milk without money and without price." This is Godlike—no charge. To the same intent is the generous call of Jesus and his church: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him who heareth say, Come. And let him who is athirst come. And whosoever will let him take of the waters of life freely;" that is, for nothing. Who after this will think of insulting the giver by dreaming of payment for the gift of salvation? Let the language of Toplady be yours—

"Nothing in my hand I bring; simply to thy cross I cling,
Naked, come to thee for dress; helpless, look to thee for grace.
Black, I to the fountain fly; wash me, Saviour, or I die."

6. The gospel is the only remedy for the wants and woes, the sins and sufferings of man.

While it is the glory of the gospel that it is a great salvation, so great that none can be compared to it; it is also its glory that it is the only salvation from sin and wrath. It is our joy to know that in Jesus Christ we have the name *Saviour* and the blessing *salvation.* But it is never to be forgotten that "there is no other name under heaven given among men in which it behoves us to be saved; neither is salvation in any other." It is our happiness to know that in Jesus we have a way to God. But it is never to be forgotten that there is no other; for "none cometh to the Father but through him." We thank God that there is a foundation laid in Zion on which we may build unto everlasting life. But let all remember that there is only one; for "other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

II. The glory of the gospel because of the preciousness of its blessings.

1. In the gospel there are two grand and distinctive departments, both of which are truly good news. The one consists of facts, the other of blessings. The facts are deeds, things done in Christ 1800 years ago. The blessings are things to be done in the soul which believes the facts. Here is God's arrangement. God in Christ comes to man with two handfuls—a handful of facts and a handful of blessings. The man who believes comes to God empty handed. In other

words, faith comes with two hands. With the one it takes the facts; with the other it gets the blessings. Faith is thus in the middle, between the facts and the blessings of the gospel. And none can receive the one without the other. The blessings are now to engage our thoughts.

2. In an endeavour to set forth this gospel glory, there are several scriptures which express the leading thoughts we wish to convey. As, for example: "Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them who love him; but God hath revealed them to us by his Spirit." "He who spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in heavenly things in Christ." And lastly: "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner-stone, choice and precious; and he who believeth on him shall not be ashamed. To you, therefore, who believe is honour." 1 Cor. ii. 9; Rom. viii. 32; Efes. i. 3; 1 Pet. ii. 6, 7.

3. It is not our intention, as it would not comport with our purpose, to expound these scriptures on the present occasion. We have brought them together as affording a sample of the rich blessings conveyed in the gospel to the children of men, and enjoyed by all who believe its glorious truths. Throughout these discourses, gospel blessings have again and again been exhibited along with gospel facts. We have seen both

what God has done and what he has provided; both the wonders he has wrought in the work of his Son, and the favours he has promised upon faith in this work. Our design now is to single out a few of these favours, to hold up to your view some of these blessings, in which we see more of the glories of the gospel, and reasons why no man on earth should neglect so great a salvation.

4. In the blessings of the gospel we have everything which soul can desire and heart can wish—if not for time, at least for eternity. If we have not every temporal, we have every spiritual blessing; if not every blessing in earthly, we have at least every blessing in heavenly things. In gospel blessings we have everything fitted to raise to true dignity in the life which now is, and to the heights of bliss in the life to come. It is the glory of the gospel that it brings to man blessings above every other plan of benevolence. These are the forgiveness of sins and justification, reconciliation and peace with God, regeneration and the indwelling of the holy Spirit, election out of the world and adoption into the family of God, union with Christ and everlasting life. Other blessings we might name, but these are enough to show the glory of the gospel as an object worthy of the highest regard of the richest as well as the poorest of the children of men.

1. The gospel is glorious because it brings pardon and justification.

The declaration of the gospel to all who hear it is, "Through Jesus is preached to you the forgiveness of

sins; and in him all who believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Here is good news to the guilty: Pardon to sinners, even the chief; justification to the condemned. The demand is faith. Only believe in Jesus, through whom the blessing flows, and you are in him, and therefore acquitted and free. "There is now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus." Being in Christ they cannot be condemned, because "the righteousness of God being upon all who believe, they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus." Here is glory, that immediately upon believing in Jesus you are justified before God,—pardoned, acquitted, and accepted, cleansed in the blood and clothed in the righteousness of Christ. Come then, O sinner, hear the word of grace, listen to the voice of mercy, "Come, now let us reason together, saith Jehovah. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land."

2. The gospel is glorious because it brings reconciliation and peace; reconciliation to God in friendship restored, and peace with God in favour enjoyed.

The call of the gospel, "Be ye reconciled to God," clearly implies that those who believe it cease to be the foes, and become the friends of God. Hence, immediately upon believing, "those who were formerly estranged, and foes in their mind by wicked works, become reconciled." As upon believing in Jesus, they

are justified, so "being justified by faith, they have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. The gospel is glorious because it brings regeneration and the indwelling of the holy Spirit.

As God, "having willed it, begets believers with the word of truth that they should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures," it follows that the begetting of God, —which is the renewing of the holy Spirit, which is the new birth of the soul, the renewing of the mind, the regeneration of the man,—is a blessing enjoyed by those who receive the word of truth, that is, the gospel. The belief of the truth is not the fruit of regeneration, but regeneration is the fruit of the belief of the truth. In like manner does the holy Spirit take up an abode in the heart. Where the truth of the Spirit is received there begins to dwell the Spirit of truth. The Spirit of Christ is the living water of which those drink who come to Christ, John vii. 37-39. The Spirit of promise is the blessing which is received through faith and not by works of law. The holy Spirit is the seal with which believers are sealed and stamped as sons immediately upon believing the gospel of salvation; the earnest of that inheritance of which they become heirs by faith in and union to Christ, Gal. iii. 2, 14; Efes. i. 13, 14. Herein is glory; that same Spirit which before strove with the sinner to bring him to the belief of the truth, now when the truth is believed dwells in the soul as a living temple,—a habitation of God in the Spirit.

4. The gospel is glorious because those who receive

it receive also election out of the world and adoption into the family of God.

Election and adoption are blessings in Christ, therefore in the gospel. Being in Christ, as Christ is free, they also are free. Being in Christ for all who believe, they are inseparable, according to God's eternal purpose. Those who are chosen *out of*, which is election, must be chosen *into*, which is adoption. Hence by the apostle they are joined together. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him in love." How chosen us? Answer—"Having predestinated us unto adoption through Jesus Christ unto himself according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace," Efes. i. 4–6. As these blessings are in the gospel, and as the gospel is free to all who believe, they are the free gift of God, which all who receive Christ receive in him and with him. Hence the glorious gospel declaration, that while Christ "came to his own, and his own received him not, to as many as received him, to them gave he authority to become children of God, even to them who believe on his name," John i. 11–13. Herein is the gospel glorious, that while it finds the sinner a poor wandering outcast, a vassal of sin, a slave of Satan, a child of the devil, it stops his wanderings, and changes his propensities, bends his will and softens his heart, brings him into the fold of the good Shepherd and puts him among the children of God, raises him to be a subject of grace and an heir of glory.

5. The gospel is glorious because all who receive it receive life everlasting.

Eternal life being a blessing in Christ, yea, inseparable from Christ, is the assured portion of all who come to him and abide in him. That eternal life is glorious, a life with God in endless bliss, must be manifest to all. How glorious, then, the plan of mercy which brings such a blessing within the reach of Adam's race. How glorious the tidings which proclaim it the free gift of God to the children of men. Be it known to all, that those who neglect the gospel put eternal life away from them. In the language of Paul to the unbelieving Jews of Antioch, they judge themselves unworthy of it. On the other hand, those whose sincere and earnest cry is, What must we do to inherit eternal life? will imitate the Gentiles of that same city, who, being determined on eternal life, when they heard the word of the Lord, were glad, and glorified the word and believed.

6. The gospel is glorious because all who receive it enter into the present glory of union with the Son of God, the centre and source of all these blessings.

As Christ is the all in all of the gospel, and as it hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness, and therefore the fulness of these blessings, dwell; in him accordingly and in him alone are the blessings of pardon and justification, reconciliation and peace, regeneration and the indwelling of the holy Spirit, election, adoption, and eternal life. To him therefore the sinner must come, in him the soul must abide. Hence

the indispensableness of faith in Christ by which the soul is united to the Saviour, and shares these blessings of salvation. Need we add, that those who are in Christ show their union by being one with him in mind and heart and spirit, one in relation to God and truth, one in relation to faith and feeling, one in relation to love and obedience. The whole is summed up in the apostle's telling words, "Now, if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Herein is the gospel glorious, that through it the soul believing enters into union with the Lord Jesus Christ which insures these unspeakable blessings.

In conclusion, consider—

1. The preciousness and the glory of these blessings. Who can describe the glory of being pardoned and justified before God; the glory of being reconciled and at peace with our Maker; the glory of being one of God's chosen, and one of his children; the glory of being born from above, born of the Spirit, and a temple in which God himself by his holy Spirit takes up an abode; the glory of eternal life and a crown and a kingdom for ever; and lastly, the glory of being one with Christ through whom these blessings flow? If men would give these glories but a little thought, they could not fail to determine to reach them. What are the brightest, the richest, the highest, the grandest glories of earth and of time compared with one of these?

2. Then how precious, how glorious the gospel, which is the storehouse of all these blessings, the casket of all

these jewels, the field in which are hid all these treasures. Having this storehouse, this casket, this field, all these jewels, these treasures, these blessings are yours. You cannot have the gospel in your heart and want one of these glories.

3. Then how precious is faith, which, taking God at his word, believes his message of mercy to sinful men, receives his Son Jesus Christ into the heart; and thus, buying the field, finds these hidden treasures, entering into the storehouse and opening the casket, makes these jewels, these glories, your own.

4. On the other hand, how great the folly, the madness, not to say the sin of unbelief; which, refusing the gospel, makes the God of truth a liar, and shuts out the soul from all these glories.

III. The glory of the gospel because of its holy lessons and sanctifying power.

"*In which will we are sanctified, through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.*"—Heb. x. 10.

The great truth taught in these words is the working of holiness in believers in accordance with the will of God, and through means of the death of Christ. Three all-important thoughts are thus distinctly and connectedly set before us.

1. All the children of God are made holy—"*We are sanctified.*" To be sanctified is to be separated from sin, to be set apart to God. As a child of God is one who has begun the new life, and has therefore forsaken sin for holiness, he must in some measure be sanctified.

This is what we understand the apostle John to mean when he says, "He who is born of God, he who abideth in him, sinneth not;" that is, does not live in sin.

2. It is the will of God that his children should be made holy—"*In* or *by which will we are sanctified.*" God being himself essentially and infinitely holy, desires the holiness of all his intelligent creatures. As a holy father, he necessarily wills to see in man a holy family. In the very nature of things, sin must be as contrary to the will as it is to the nature of God. Hence, as believers, are those who "in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth are chosen" out of the world, in them the will of God is thus far accomplished that they have forsaken sin and begun a life of holiness. For this end they are "chosen to be holy and blameless before him in love." "For this is the will of God, even your sanctification." Salvation otherwise is impossible. "Without sanctification none shall see the Lord." Man's ruin being sin, he is saved from ruin only as he is saved from sin. Hence the will of God to save is his will to sanctify.

3. The sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ for sin is one grand means through which God saves his people from sin. "*We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once.*" This teaches us that Christ's death is not only an atonement in order to our justification, but also the groundwork of our sanctification. Strikingly set forth in this same epistle. "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctify to the purifying

of the flesh ; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" Hence the blood of Christ being shed, the Spirit of Christ is given. Hence justification is of no avail without sanctification. The forgiveness of past sins, were it possible, can be of no benefit to those who still go on in sin.

All this teaches us that if the lessons and tendencies of the gospel were not holy, it would be no good news to the children of men. But it is our joy to know that one of its grandest truths and brightest glories is its tendency to holiness. This is seen in all its departments, in its doctrines and promises, precepts and institutions, all of which are lessons gloriously fitted, as they were intended, to make man holy as God is holy. Hence the gospel brings believers in it, not only to the friendship, but also to the likeness of God. This glory we shall endeavour to establish by the following observations :—

1. The gospel makes holy, because it hides pride from man, and lays him low in his own esteem.

To a fallen creature, yea, to every creature, this must be the first element of holiness. It is one of the first lessons of the gospel. Everything in it humbles man and exalts God. In this its glorious adaptation is seen. Humility is the first step to holiness. If the gospel, therefore, did not humble, it could not make holy. We observe three things in it which combine to lay the sinner in the dust.

1st, It shows him his own true character and condition in the sight of a holy God. This it does by teaching him that as guilty he is lost and undone, sunk in the horrible pit and miry clay, out of which he never could have been rescued but by the hand of the very God against whom he has rebelled. It teaches him to hide his face in the dust for shame, and to cry out "Unclean, unclean;" "God be merciful to me a sinner."

2d, There is nothing of man in the gospel: it is all of God from first to last: all grace, no merit. The reign of grace is seen throughout: grace sovereign, rich, and free. "Grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." This is seen both in the atonement and in faith, in the work of Christ and of the holy Spirit, in the provision made, and in the available means. The sinner obtains gospel blessings not as a debt, but as a favour; not by works, but by believing; not by giving in return for the bounty, but by taking what God gives, and as he gives it, without money and without price. Thus the gospel being all of God and not of man, boasting is shut out, and that by the law of faith.

3d, The greatest sinner being as welcome as the least, there is no room for pride in the gospel. It is its glory to level all distinctions. Like its author, it is no respecter of persons. The rich and the poor, the virtuous and the vicious, are all alike welcome to its blessings. "For there is no difference, for all have sinned." Yet the rich and the self-righteous, priding

themselves on their rank and their virtue, stumble at the gospel on this very ground, that it is too humbling for them. Hence the needle-eyed difficulty of their entrance into the kingdom of God, and the hardship of obedience to the king. But all in vain. If they would be saved they must submit; if they would be rich, they must become poor; if they would be righteous, they must renounce their own righteousness. One of the first lessons of the king is humbleness of mind. "Happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Another, that unless men stoop to be little children, the gate is too strait for them to get through into the way of life. "Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall not enter therein." In all this there is true, Godlike glory. There is no glory in pride, for "pride goeth before destruction;" but there is in humility, for besides being honourable in itself, it is the road to honour. The history of all true greatness among men teaches us that "before honour is humility." In all this "the gospel is its own witness" to the divinity of its origin and the humanity of its adaptations. It is the best lesson of humility the world ever read, from the best teacher of lowly-mindedness the world ever saw. In all its teachings one grand aim is ever in view, that no flesh should boast in the presence of its Author, but "he who boasteth let him boast in the Lord."

2. The gospel makes holy, because it binds all who receive it to childlike, thankful, and holy obedience.

1st, The gospel binds, yet it alone makes free. It

binds, but it is a holy bond, the bond of faith in, and obedience to, God and his Son Jesus Christ. It is true freedom, because it is the freedom of the truth. And as Cowper well says,—

> "He is the freeman whom the truth makes free,
> And all are slaves besides."

It is true freedom, because while it calls to freedom, it calls us not to use our freedom for an occasion to the flesh, nor for a cloak of malice, but as servants of God. The service of God is the only true emancipation from sin, and therefore the only true freedom for man.

2d, The obedience to which the gospel binds is childlike, thankful, and holy. Childlike—because it teaches the believer to look to God as his Father, and to obey him with all the heartiness and affection of a tenderly loving child. Thankful—because the motive from which it springs is gratitude for love manifested and deliverance wrought. Under the constraining influence of the gospel the believer feels that he cannot do enough to please that God whose love has provided such a salvation, and to serve that Redeemer to whom he owes his life, his hope, his all. This obedience is holy, because the precepts of the gospel are all holy, and the motives by which it stimulates to their observance are all noble and pure. One of its most powerfully purifying lessons is, "Ye are not your own, but bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and spirit, which are his." Thus believers are

"dead to sin, and alive to God through Jesus Christ our Lord."

3. The gospel makes holy, because it strengthens the claims and increases the obligation of the law.

1st, The moral precepts of Christ are a further and stronger enforcement of those given in the Old Testament. It was always the duty of man to love God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself. These, our Saviour teaches, are the two great commandments on which hang all the law and the profets. The claims of God to our utmost love are strong in nature, but stronger in the gospel. The claims of our fellow-men to our impartial benevolence are understood and felt more clearly and powerfully from Christ's teaching and example than ever before. As from his words we learn that every man is our neighbour, so from his death for every man, we learn that all have a claim to our most self-denying love. The gospel teaches us, both in letter and in spirit, that "love is the fulfilling of the law," and that "he who dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him." Thus while the believer is "not without law to God, he is under law to Christ." And thus while the righteousness of the gospel justifies those who believe in Jesus, the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in them only, inasmuch as they alone walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. The more we are under the power of the gospel, the more do we "delight in the law of God after the inner man."

2d, While the Old Testament teaches us that "the

commandment is exceeding broad," the Lord Jesus teaches much more than Moses that the law of God reaches to the very thoughts and feelings of the heart. From him we learn that causeless anger and a lustful look are respectively breaches of the sixth and seventh commandments, Matt. v. 17–32.

3d, The gospel strengthens the claims and obligations of obedience to the whole will of God, because of the loftier principles and higher motives which it enforces. Israel was taught the claims of God, from what he is, and from what he had done for them as a nation in their redemption by Moses from a temporal yoke. We are taught the claims of God also from what he is, and from what he has done for mankind as a race, but much more from the blessings of each individual believer in redemption by Christ from the galling yoke of sin and Satan, and the doom of eternal woe. Hence we are taught the duty of resolution against the lordship of sin over us, from this consideration, that "we are not under the law, but under grace"—not under a system of national compulsion, but under the power of gospel love. "Do we then make void the law through faith? By no means. Yea, we establish the law," Rom. iii. 31; vi. 14.

4. The gospel makes holy, because by all these means it is the most powerful instrument for breaking the power of sin, and working in the soul the likeness of God.

1st, The design of the gospel being to bring man back not only to the friendship, but also to the like-

ness, the moral likeness of his Maker, it required to have a sanctifying as well as a justifying power. And so it has. The gospel is pre-eminently a plan of holiness. It shows us sin as seen by God, and holiness as seen in Christ. The gospel makes holy as God is holy. Its salvation is deliverance from the power, as well as from the punishment of sin. "The grace of God, which hath appeared to all men, is saving," inasmuch as it teaches us the great lessons of holiness—namely, "to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." Hence we are taught that Jesus, in dying for us, not only "gave himself a ransom for all," but also "gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father," and "that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify to himself a peculiar people"—that is, a people to be his own, "zealous of good works," Tit. ii. 11–14 ; Gal. i. 3.

2d, Accordingly we have life by Christ's death only as we die to sin and live to God. He only who dies to sin, dies with Christ, and is justified from sin. He only who is freed from the thralldom of sin and Satan, enters into the freedom of Christ and of holiness. He only who abandons the service of sin, can hope to escape the payment of its wages. Hence it is that faith without works is like the body without the spirit. Such are the precious, the essential lessons of the gospel, which all must learn who profess faith in its facts, and who would enjoy its blessings.

3d, It is the glory of the gospel that it not only teaches these lessons, but that without it they cannot be learned or practised. None of the children of men is or can be holy but those who believe and obey the gospel. Nay, more, those most deeply imbued with its spirit are the most illustrious examples of piety. None so lowly-minded or self-denying—none so dead to the world and alive to God—in one word, none so like Christ. Such was "the goodly fellowship of the apostles;" such "the noble army of martyrs;" such those who in every age have served best and suffered most in the kingdom of God's dear Son. Through faith in the glorious facts of the gospel, and through the rich enjoyment of its present blessings, they were lifted above the world and the flesh, above temptations and persecutions, yea, above themselves. Although men of like passions with others, yet through the indwelling power of the holy Spirit working by the gospel, they separated themselves unreservedly to God and his Christ, and took joyfully the toiling of his service, and the spoiling of their goods, going cheerfully even to prison and to death for his truth, and being in all more than conquerors through him who loved them, Heb. x. 32–34; Rom. viii. 31–39.

In conclusion,—

1. From these reflections we learn generally the hallowing influence of the facts and doctrines of the gospel—such as the love of God, and the atonement of Christ; of the precepts and institutions of the gospel —such as the sermon on the mount, baptism and the

Lord's supper; of the promises and predictions of the gospel—such as a crown of glory, and the appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

2. The special influence of the central fact of the gospel—namely, the death of the Son of God. While the gospel makes us holy by humbling us, there is nothing so fitted to lay us lowly in the dust as the cross of Christ, where we see God's well-beloved Son humbling himself so low as to hang on the accursed tree, and despise the shame, and all for sin, and all for us. While the gospel makes us holy by binding us to obedience, there is nothing so fitted to quicken us in the path of holy, childlike obedience as the cross of Christ, where we see the Son of God laying down his life for his foes at the command of his Father. While the gospel makes holy by strengthening the claims and obligation of the law of God, there is nothing so fitted to strengthen these claims as the cross of Christ, where we see both the Father and the Son magnifying and honouring the law by an atonement for sin. And, lastly, while the gospel makes holy by showing us the loathsomeness and evil of sin, and the loveliness and beauty of holiness, there is nothing which so much gives us this view as the cross of Christ, where we see the evil of sin to be so great, and the beauty of holiness so bright, that deliverance from the one and elevation to the other were possible for man only by the death of the Son of God. Thus in the words of Toplady we may all say—

"Rock of Ages! cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee:
Let the water and the blood, from thy wounded side which flowed,
Be of sin the *double cure;* cleanse me from its guilt and power."

IV. The glory of the gospel, because of its tendency to farther peace and good-will among men.

"*Peace on earth, and good-will among men.*"—Luke ii. 14.

1. The gospel is not more remarkable for the hallowed change which it works upon the individual, than for the happy change which it works upon society. Not only does it fill with peace and joy, love and goodness, the heart in which it finds an abode, but it also spreads peace and plenty, contentment and good-will, wherever it prevails. The most civilised nations of the earth have had many a hard struggle and many a weary step in the march of improvement. And whatever may have been the means in dark ages long since gone by, this we find now in modern times, that it is vain to send the plough or the printing-press before the gospel.

2. The happy condition of mankind in the latter days is glowingly set forth in ancient predictions. But no words could more aptly and briefly state the filanthropic design and tendencies of the gospel towards society at large, than those of the heavenly host on the plains of Bethlehem, "Peace upon earth, and good-will among men." These words we understand to intimate that Christianity was intended and destined to promote

the best temporal interests of mankind. And this we know it has done wherever its own genuine influence has prevailed. In any case which might be deemed an exception, it will be found the result of some hostile ungodly power which, void of Christianity, has yet employed the profession of friendship towards it as an instrument of worldly ambition and political design. True Christianity, the pure and undefiled religion of the Lord Jesus—in one word, the gospel—will ever be found promoting "peace upon earth, and good-will among men."

3. Two very comprehensive features of the man-loving, man-elevating tendencies of the gospel are here brought to view. *Peace,* a specific; *good-will,* a generic. Peace objective,—the outward state of society. Good-will subjective,—an inward feeling of the individual bosom. Peace,—the happy quiet which reigns through the world among nations and tribes, families and neighbours of all ranks. Good-will,—the kindly feeling of nation towards nation, and man towards man, amid all existing distinctions. There may be peace without good-will, but the latter is necessary to the comfort and stability of the former. The brighter glory of the gospel is this, that it promotes the inward emotion, which is the best guarantee of a happy, lasting peace. Only let good-will reign among men, and earth will become as the garden of the Lord, and Eden's bowers will bloom again.

1. It is the glory of the gospel that it is the harbinger of peace upon earth.

Before going on to establish this statement, it may not be unnecessary to clear our way by noticing a seeming contradiction.

1st, The gospel has often been an occasion of strife and contention, tumult and war. The Lord Jesus himself foresaw this, and foretold it in very remarkable words—"Think not that I have come to send peace upon earth. I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be those of his own household." We are not to understand this to be the design of the Prince of peace, or the tendency of the gospel of peace. It is not the Saviour who desires, or the gospel which makes strife and war. It is not the Saviour who intends, or the gospel which promotes quarrels and tumults. It is not the gospel which, in persecution of the righteous, and in prosecution of malice, separates friends and families, builds and fills prisons, forges and fastens fetters, spoils goods, and tortures soul and body, and drags the best of the sons of men to the scaffold or the stake. These things are not, and cannot be done by the gospel. They are done against it, and in spite of it. Were the gospel obeyed by those who oppose, as well as by those who believe, there would be no persecution, no war, no hatred. Peace, household peace, national peace, would reign everywhere, blessing families and tribes, churches and the world. But the gospel prevailing in some hearts, and

not in others, has been the innocent occasion of much hatred and bloodshed. While its spirit and tendencies are all peaceable, its nature and requirements are opposed to sin and Satan, to the flesh and the world. These, therefore, have all along been opposed to the gospel, and have done their utmost to stay its progress and destroy its power. Hence the strife and contention. The war which the gospel thus occasions is the reproach of its foes, and they alone are accountable for its dire results; but it is the honour of its friends, and brightens and burnishes their eternal crown. The power of the gospel in the hearts and consciences of those enlightened and saved by it is so great, that while they would be the last in the world to kindle the flames of strife, yet sooner than give up its glorious truths, they would be thrust out of doors by their dearest friends, and be carried to prison and to death by their bitterest foes. Their appeal has always been with Peter—"Whether it be right before God to hearken to you rather than to God, judge ye." And their watchword—"It behoves us to obey God rather than man." If peace must sway, one of the parties must yield. The friends of truth cannot, and the foes of truth will not. Hence, as the wisdom which cometh from above is first pure then peaceable, peace is sacrificed for the sake of purity. But the gospel, the truth, is not accountable for the strife. Its watchword, as ever, is, "Peace upon earth, and good-will among men."

2d, The gospel in its principles and spirit, teaching

and tendencies, is the friend and harbinger of peace upon earth.

(1.) The spirit and teaching of its author are altogether peaceable. The Lord of glory stands first among the sons of men as "meek and lowly in heart," having in this as "in all things the pre-eminence." In every sense of the words, he is "the Prince of peace." He blesses the peacemakers, declaring them children of God. He teaches his followers never to return evil for evil, but to love their enemies, to bless those who curse them, to do good to those who hate them, and pray for those who despitefully use and persecute them. When sending his servants out to proclaim his kingdom, he tells them to expect persecution, going, as they were, like lambs among wolves; but ever to combine the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove. Nor were these mere words: he himself set the brightest possible example. As is witnessed by one of his most intimate personal followers—"When he was reviled, he reviled not again, when he suffered, he threatened not, but gave himself up to him who judgeth righteously." In thus seeing the peaceable spirit and pattern of the chief leader and finisher of the faith, we see the spirit of the gospel itself, "peace upon earth."

(2.) The same peaceable spirit and principles were enforced and practised by the apostles and primitive Christians. Thus says Paul—"Recompense to none evil for evil. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you live peaceably with all men." Again—"Let us follow

after the things which make for peace." Again—"Be at peace among yourselves. See that none render evil for evil to any one, but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves and to all men." And again—"The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle to all." In the same way we might quote again and again from Peter, who dwells largely on the duty of believers to exemplify patience under wrong, and "a meek and quiet spirit, which in the sight of God is of great price," 1 Pet. ii. 18-23; iii. 4, 8–11, 14–17. Thus as in the Master, so in the servants, every word breathes peace, "peace upon earth."

(3.) The principles and precepts of the gospel not only enjoin and demand peace and the endurance of wrong, but also forbid all quarrelling, strife and contention. Thus the apostle James, while teaching the necessity of guiding and curbing the tongue, says, "But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, boast not, and lie not against the truth. This is not the wisdom coming down from above, but is earthly, animal, fiendish. For where envying and strife are, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace." A beautiful outline of the spirit of the gospel, in its march of purity and peace among men; from which we see why, with all its peaceableness, it is sometimes in the midst of strife. Being

first pure, however much it loves peace, it will sooner suffer the hottest fire of persecution than surrender purity for peace.

(4.) In the same manner, the gospel teaches all who receive it to be good and peaceable citizens. In matters of religion and conscience, they are to be guided by the Saviour's words, "I came not to send peace upon earth, but a sword." In matters of the world and politics, they are to be guided by the angels' words, "Peace upon earth." For both, the Saviour has given one grand rule, "Render to Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and to God the things which are God's." From which we are taught, that as God leaves to Cæsar the things of Cæsar, Cæsar should leave to God the things of God. But should he dare to rob God, seeking to control conscience in matters of faith and religious duty, "*render to God*," and "*no surrender to Cæsar*," must be the Christian's watchword. In the things which belong to Cæsar, subjection is the New Testament rule. "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work." Kindred exhortations are so often given that it is needless to repeat. It is interesting, however, to notice that in the same spirit we are taught "to pray for all men, for kings, and all who are in authority." Why? "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." And why? "For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth."

(5.) The spirit and principles of the gospel are utterly at variance with the spirit and principles of war. This is a question on which we believe Christians generally are much in the dark. Because in Scripture there is no direct word against the followers of Christ going to war; because we read of devout soldiers both in the Word of God and in general history; and because we have no word of their leaving, or being instructed to leave, the army; and because the defence of our fatherland and our homes, our liberties and our lives, is a universal duty,—on these and other accounts, the evil of Christians having any hand in war, sits lightly upon many minds. Those who have been influenced by one or all of these considerations we would remind—that the two first are equally applicable to the justification of polygamy and slavery. As, however, we find that Christianity has been left to exert its heavenly and Godlike influence in the undermining of these two blighting evils, so with the dire curse of war. If it were never to succeed in sweeping the three alike out of the world, surely it will succeed in purging the church. And if the world is ever to be rid of these evils, who is to occupy the van in the march of universal freedom, purity, and peace, if not the church? As crying sins against God and man, against Christ and Christianity, all the three demand the stern frown of every follower of Jesus. But the peace spirit of Christianity, in direct antagonism to the war spirit, is our present inquiry. On which we further plead, that as "Peace upon earth" is

on the gospel banner; and as this intimates that the gospel will spread peace wherever its influence reaches, and therefore that Christians will be men of peace and not of war, how are these intimations to be verified unless the followers of Christ set their faces like flint against war and the spirit of war, and deem it un-Christ-like, and therefore unworthy of Christians to be on the battlefield or the drill-ground? Let him who loves the gospel remember that he is bound to love the souls of his fellow-men, yea, to love his enemies. How can we both love them, and fight and kill them? "If thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink." If nations will not learn these gospel lessons, Christians must. If nations will go to war, Christians must not. On their banner we read, "Peace upon earth," and by its angelic watchword they are bound to discountenance not only the causes, but the spirit and the practice and the arts of war. If "war is a game which, were their subjects wise, kings would not play at," much more is war a game which, were Christians more like Christ, they could not play at. Thus the gospel is glorious as the harbinger and friend of "peace upon earth."

2. It is the glory of the gospel that it is both a manifestation and a promoter of "good-will among men."

Both of these are great truths; but we regard the latter as mainly intended in the angelic song. The preposition ἐν, *in*, here used, generally denotes before the plural *among*, rather than *towards*, as in our version. And it is the same which we have in the first

clause, where *towards* would be out of the question. At the same time we shall briefly illustrate both thoughts.

1st, The gospel is good-will towards men, bespeaking the kindly feeling of its author towards the race. It teaches us that God is love, that he is love to all, that he is no respecter of persons, that he wishes well to every child of Adam, desiring the present happiness and eternal salvation of all. It levels all distinctions of nations, and tribes, and ranks, according to the great truth, that "God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth." It teaches us that in Christ, and accordingly in his church and kingdom, there is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free, but Christ is all; and nothing avails but the new creation. In Christ, and accordingly in his church, "the rich and the poor meet together," standing on the same lofty platform of Christianity, to be distinguished, not by outward rank, as is too much the case,—but by likeness to Christ. While the gospel comes with decided impartiality to men, it yet looks with an eye of pity upon the poor, and all who are in any distress. This is beautifully foreshadowed in the burden of the Saviour's ministry, and in the whole of his manner among men. His ministry was, indeed, as foretold, "good tidings to the poor, liberty to the captive, healing to the bruised, and the opening of the prison door to those who are bound." To publicans and sinners, scorned as they were by the proud and self-righteous, he paid the kindest attention.

They reproached him with what is his honour and our joy, when they said, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them."

"He came the broken heart to bind, the bleeding souls to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace to enrich the humble poor."

Thus all nations and ranks, all conditions and characters, being all one to God, and all one to Jesus, are all welcome to the blessings of his gospel, the brightest manifestation of "good will towards men."

2d, The gospel is good-will among men, inasmuch as it engenders the kindly disposition of its author in the hearts of men towards one another. As it is the good will of God, it necessarily begets the like good will wherever it receives a welcome. This is a test of faith by which it would be well for all who bear the name of Christ to try their sincerity.

(1.) The kindly spirit of the gospel is seen in the kind-heartedness of believers towards their fellow-men. The gospel is a mould into which those who believe it are cast, and accordingly we expect to see in them the disposition of its author, the imitation of God and of Christ. As good-will towards men, therefore, is displayed in the gospel, it must also be displayed in believers. Does it teach us that God is love? It must make us the same. Does it level all distinctions of nations, and tribes, and ranks? We must drink in the same spirit. Does it pity and relieve those in distress? We must be ready to do the same. In short, as it is itself, it must make us also, liberal, large-hearted, and tender in our feelings, words, and actions towards men.

As it regards the spiritual wellbeing of men to be the chief concern, it necessarily begets pity for perishing souls. It teaches us, in the words of Solomon, "not to forbear to deliver those who are drawn to death, and those who are ready to be slain." Hence the duty of preaching the gospel to every creature, both at home and in foreign lands, according to the Lord's command, Mark xvi. 15. Hence the missions of the Christian churches. Hence the duty of large-hearted and cheerful contributions to maintain those who preach the gospel, according to the Lord's ordinance, 1 Cor. ix. 14. Hence the duty of every believer in Jesus to make personal efforts to bring friends and neighbours to the knowledge of the truth, to snatch souls as brands from the burning. Hence Sabbath schools, and the distribution of little silent gospel messengers, to bring both young and old to Jesus. Hence Christ's people are the light of the world and the salt of the earth, to keep it from darkness and death, putrefaction and destruction. All these manifestations of good-will are but streams from the overflowing fountain: some of them broad and deep, some of them shallow and narrow, and some but very small rills; yet all flowing from the same source, and all conveying richest blessings to thirsty lands and dying souls; all streams of mercy and good-will to men.

In advancing the temporal wellbeing of men, the gospel teaches the same lesson, and breathes the same spirit. It teaches compassion to the poor and needy, to the outcast, and the down-trodden. It teaches us,

beyond the law, to love our neighbour as ourselves. It constrains us to remember those who are in bonds, as bound with them; to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke, Isa. lviii. 6; Heb. xiii. 3. It is not Christianity, but the want of it, which keeps a fellow-man in unmerited thraldom. The man who, bearing the Christian name, holds a slave, does it in spite of the gospel, because slaveholding is not "good-will among men." The man who can unrighteously imprison, or in any way crush or trample upon a fellow-creature, is bidding defiance to the gospel, which is "good-will among men." The man who in any way can persecute his fellow-man in the name of Christ and Christianity, is belying the gospel and his own profession. In short, all proud oppression, all haughty unkindness, all unfriendliness, unbrotherliness, and unforbearance, are in direct opposition to the good-will of the gospel. If a cup of cold water given to a disciple, in the name of a disciple, shall not lose its reward, the withholding of this cup cannot go unpunished. The Author of the gospel will reckon up all these accounts in the last day, Matt. xxv. 35–46.

(2.) The kindly spirit of the gospel is seen in the humanizing influence which it exerts upon those lands where it is made known. It has taught, and is teaching, men that the world at large is their country, and that every man, being a man, is a brother. Both individuals and governments, having no personal religion, have been and are being thus influenced. Through the indirect sway of the gospel, measures of good-will

are daily rising and spreading on every hand. Charitable institutions, of which heathenism, and even Popery, never dreamed; kindly plans of usefulness, which filosofy never taught—nay, which the learned pride of her schools would have scorned—are daily blessing with food and clothing, shelter and education, thousands of the lowest outcasts of society. It will invariably be found that the religion, or the principle which gives most glory to God, spreads most good-will among men; and it will be noted that this is precisely the first and last note of the angelic song. An ungodly filosofy has sought to glorify man more than God; in the same proportion has it scorned and neglected, crushed and enslaved the poor. But the gospel, which more than any other system brings glory to God, has more than any other system stretched out a helping hand to the lowest and most despised of men, recognizing in them all—what they have as much as the rich and the mighty—bodies to be fed and comfortably housed, hearts to be cheered, minds to be educated, and souls to be fitted for eternal joys. Out of the gospel has sprung the universal week-day school, as well as the Sabbath school; in short, all the plans at work for the social and individual, the intellectual, moral, and religious elevation of man. Freedom of every kind, political and ecclesiastical, corporeal and mental, is the birthright of every man; but, robbed from thousands for ages, it is being restored by the gospel. Of all men, none should hail and prize the gospel more than the poor. It raises them to happiness in time,

notwithstanding their poverty; and it meetens them for wealth and glory in eternity. In every believer, but especially in the poor saints, "godliness is seen to be profitable unto all things." And of all the race of Adam, who should glory in the gospel more than the daughters of Eve? Where the love of God in Christ has been unknown, or little known, woman has been trampled in the dust. But wherever the message of mercy has been hailed, it has been the sure signal of woman's elevation to her rightful place among the lords of creation. In short, the gospel is the only universal heal-all for the sins and sorrows, the mischiefs and miseries of man, both for time and eternity.

In conclusion consider—

1. The bounden duty of every true patriot and filanthropist to regard the gospel above all other things. Desiring, as they do, the elevation of their country and mankind, and doing their utmost, by social and political reforms, to raise the degraded and oppressed, let them never forget that no lever but the gospel will ever raise the fallen to their right position. On this ground we would plead that home missions and town missions, Sabbath schools, and the circulation of the Scriptures, have the strongest claim to the support of all whose watchword is "good-will among men."

2. The poor, hard-working man himself, we implore to regard the claims of the gospel. If you will not attend to it for the sake of your soul and eternity, think of the benefits which it will bring to you in the present life. Waste brings want, and drink makes a

drudge; but the gospel brings happiness and peace. Embrace the good tidings of God's love in Christ, and you become possessed of that "godliness which is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life which now is, and of that which is to come."

A more appropriate conclusion to this branch of our meditations we do not know than "*The Gospel Echo*," a portion of which we give, as illustrating "good-will among men:"—

"True faith, producing love to God and man:—
Say, *Echo*, is not this the gospel plan?
The gospel plan.
Must I my faith and love to Jesus show
By doing good to all, both friend and foe?
Both friend and foe.
But if a brother hates and treats me ill,
Must I return him good, and love him still?
And love him still.
If he my failings watches to reveal,
Must I his faults as carefully conceal?
As carefully conceal.
Whatever usage ill I may receive,
Must I be patient still, and still forgive?
Be patient still, and still forgive."

V. The glory of the gospel in its eternal results.

"*And he who sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.*"—Rev. xxi. 5.

Having reviewed the gospel plan from its beginning in the love of God, to its accomplishment in the death of Christ, and its influence in the work of the holy

Spirit, it remains for us now to take a short survey of the final and eternal results of the whole. The theme is vast; imagination fails in its highest flights. We can only try to gather together a few hints, such as those presented in the three last chapters of the Book of Revelation.

The words now read present one glorious issue—*renovation;* one grand idea—"*all things made new.*" This one idea acquires additional interest from analogy, both of nature and grace, both in the globe and in man. In the creation of the heavens and the earth, when first prepared for man, chaos and darkness passed away; "all things were made new." In the regeneration of the believing soul, when prepared for God, chaos and darkness also pass away. "For if any one be in Christ Jesus, there is a new creation; old things pass away, behold all things become new." So in the end of the age, man is made over again in the general resurrection, and the heavens and the earth are made over again in the general conflagration; and he who sits on the throne of the universe says once more, "Behold, I make all things new." Indeed, the analogy is so striking, both in these three great changes, and in the constant workings of nature, that we are led to think that, in like manner, the everlasting God has been, and will be, at work through the countless ages of eternity, and the boundless range of the universe. There is a natural and moral chemistry in unceasing and universal operation.

Into the many interesting questions connected with

the thousand years, and the reign of Christ, of Christianity and Christians upon the earth, the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, and the eternal future of the righteous and the wicked, it would be out of place here to enter. Our theme being the gospel, by that we must abide. A summary glance at its final results is all we can now overtake. And this glance we have summed up in the words, "*all things made new.*" In a survey of this universal renovation, we are led to consider the destruction of all opposing elements, the new creation of man and the earth, and the everlasting duration of the kingdom of Christ and of God.

1. The destruction of the old elements of suffering and sin, will be accomplished in the conflagration of the globe, and in the eternal doom of Satan, death, and hell.

1st, As to the conflagration of the globe, we read that "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire." This, we believe, will be "the day of the Lord, which will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth, and the works which are in it, shall be burned up." This we understand to be the day when "fire will come down from God out of heaven and devour" the nations which are deceived by Satan, to "compass the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city." Then shall be seen the great white throne, and he who sits upon it, saying, "Behold,

I make all things new;" at which word "the earth and the heavens will flee away from his face." In other words, they will be burned with fire. Compare 2 Thess. i. 7, 8; 2 Pet. iii. 7–12; Rev. xx. 7–11.

2d, As to the eternal doom of sin and Satan, we learn that the devil and his angels, all his evil devices and hellish works, shall be vanquished and destroyed. The first word of mercy to man foretold that the bruising of the Saviour's heel would be the bruising of the serpent's head. Hence, "for this the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." Nay, more, "he took flesh and blood, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil." That this end would be accomplished by his death, Jesus himself foresaw when nearing the cross. "Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the ruler of this world be cast out." Thus, from first to last, we learn that the death of Christ was to be the destruction of Satan. This was not done all at once. Like the revolutions of nature, the work of undermining, of destruction and renovation, is constantly, slowly, and almost imperceptibly, but surely, going on. When the thousand years are ended, and Satan is again loosed for a little season, then will his day of final overthrow and destruction come. Then shall come to pass that which is written, "The devil who deceived the nations was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false profet are, and they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever." Compare

Gen. iii. 15; 1 John iii. 8; Heb. ii. 14; John xii. 21, xvi. 11; Rev. xx. 10.

3d, As to the destruction of death, we learn that this also will be a result of the gospel plan. As Jesus Christ came to destroy him who had the power of death, so he came to destroy death itself. Hence we read as if this were already done—"he hath abolished or destroyed death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel." His death was the death of death; his resurrection shed a light from heaven upon the darkness of the grave, and showed his saints the path of life to everlasting day at God's right hand. When the Lord himself descends from heaven with a shout, when the trumpet sounds, and the dead awake, and the living are changed, and the saints are caught up together in the clouds into the air to meet the Lord, then this will be seen. Then "death, the last foe, shall be destroyed;" then the word which is written shall be done, "Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O hell, where is thy victory?" Then, as there will be no more sin, there will be no more suffering, and no more curse, and accordingly no more death, to pain or annoy the saints of God. Then "death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death." That is, death shall no more bring corruption to bodies, and hell no more separation to souls, "For the former things have passed away," 2 Tim. i. 10; 1 Thess. iv. 13–17; 1 Cor. xv. 26, 54, 55; Rev. xx. 14.

2. The old elements of sin and suffering being

destroyed, the glorious result will be seen in the renovation of all things, more especially in the entirely new condition of man and of the earth.

1st, The bodily condition of man will be renewed. Of course, be it understood that we speak of those who are saved through believing in the gospel. Those who believe not perish, being cast with the devil into the lake of fire and brimstone, which is the second death. But very different is the portion of those who believe in Jesus. The change which they undergo in the resurrection, the glory of both soul and body to which they rise at the appearing of Jesus Christ, is great beyond our conception. The apostle Paul, contrasting the dying body with the rising body, says, "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown an animal body, it is raised a spiritual body. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. For this corrupt must put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality." Here are six elements in the future condition of the bodies of those who have obeyed the gospel, contrasted with the present, and all enough to raise the coldest heart to instant decision for Christ. No more corruption, no more dishonour, no more weakness, no more flesh and blood, no more liability to death, no more the image of the earthy. Who, sensible of the present feebleness and humblingness of the frame in which we groan, being burdened, does not desire to be

clothed upon with the house which is from heaven, that mortality might be swallowed up of life? Who does not glory in the thought of one day having done with flesh and blood, and dwelling for ever in a strong, incorruptible, deathless, spiritual body, a frame of blooming beauty, unfading youth and bounding elasticity and vigour? And such is the assured hope of all who love and obey the gospel. The future bodily condition of the believer is farther presented to view by comparisons both from the natural world and from beings who have already reached the higher glory:—stars and the sun, angels and the Sun of righteousness himself. "They who are wise shall shine as the firmament, and they who turn many to righteousness, as the stars for ever and ever." Yea, says the Saviour, "The righteous shall shine as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." As to higher beings, Jesus teaches us that "they who are accounted worthy to obtain that world, and the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are given in marriage, neither can they die any more, for they are equal to the angels, and are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection." Mark the thought, "equal to the angels." Nor is this all; believers, in their bodies, will not only be equal to the angels, but also like Christ, "For our citizenship is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like to the body of his glory." And while "it doth not yet appear what we shall be, we know that when he shall ap-

pear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is." See 1 Cor. xv. 42–55; 2 Cor. v. 1–5; Dan. xii. 1–3; Matt. xiii. 43; Luke xx. 35, 36; Fil. iii. 20, 21; 1 John iii. 2.

2d, The social condition of the believer will necessarily harmonise with the renewal of the body. As the blight of sin will be no more on man, it will be no more on the productions of nature or the circumstances of society. This will be ensured by the perpetual presence of God and of Christ with the saints in glory. Again and again is this brought to view in these last chapters of Revelation,—"And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, their God." This we understand to be a visible manifestation of the presence and glory of God, such as earth has never seen. And mark the happiness and joy which will flow therefrom to every bosom, —"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." And why? "For the former things have passed away." Nor is this all,—"There shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him, and they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle nor light of the sun, for the Lord God giveth them light; and they shall reign for ever and ever."—Rev. xxi. 3, 4; xxii. 3–5.

3d, There will also be a corresponding change in the condition of man's dwelling-place. We do not now enter into the inquiry, whether this earth, or some other globe, will be the future abode of the saints. Enlargement here on any one of the themes of this section, we deem quite out of place. An outline is all our present aim. I am inclined, from Scripture, to think that, for a time after the resurrection, and during the burning of the globe, the saints will be with Jesus in some other part of creation; and that afterwards, when the earth, emerging out of the conflagration in tenfold Eden-beauty, shall again be habitable, the saints will return. Their leaving the earth for a time at the re-appearing of Jesus Christ, we think taught in John xiv. 1–3; 1 Thess. iv. 16, 17. It seems also necessary during the burning of the globe. Their return may be the possible meaning of "the holy city, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," Rev. xxi. 2, 10, 24–27. We infer it, farther, from all that is said about "new heavens and a new earth." This renewal of the face of nature, the apostle Peter clearly connects with the burning of the globe—"Seeing that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought we to be in holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting to the coming of the day of God, in which the heavens, being on fire, shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" After this awful convulsion of nature, the apostle immediately adds, "Nevertheless we, ac-

cording to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, in which dwelleth righteousness." The apostle John, in like manner, before he sees the holy city coming down out of heaven, says, "I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away, and the sea is no more." This we understand to intimate that, after the sky is dissolved by fire, there will be a new sky overhead, from which all hurtful vapours will be swept away; and after the earth is burned, there will be a new soil under foot, all thorns and thistles being destroyed. A like change will come over the sea, so that the former sea, like the former earth, will be renewed. We do not understand this as our version has it, that "there will be no more sea," but that the sea which at present is will be no more. There will be a new sea as well as a new sky and a new earth. So fully accomplished will be the words, "Behold, I make all things new." Compare 2 Pet. iii. 11–13; Rev. xxi. 1.

3. The old elements of sin and suffering being destroyed, and man and the globe being renewed, the final result will be the everlasting reign of God and of Christ on the earth over a countless host of redeemed and spotless souls in spiritual, immortal, and incorruptible bodies.

1st, In the eternal reign of God and of Christ among men, will be seen the establishment of an everlasting kingdom, reared out of the ruins of the fall, a kingdom whose glory is above all other kingdoms. The reign of God over man, interrupted by sin and Satan, is

now restored to all eternity. In this kingdom no more rebellion and war, no more intemperance and lust, no more oppression and want, no more poverty and repining, no more sin and sorrow. As a kingdom of holiness and righteousness, peace and love, it will be a kingdom of saints. As a kingdom of heavenly dignity and holy consecration, it will be a kingdom of kings and of priests to God. When the end of the present dispensation comes, Christ will give back the kingdom over all things to his Father; but his kingdom over the redeemed, we believe, will be his own to all eternity. His headship over all things is different from his headship over his body, the church. When all things are changed in the general conflagration, the end of his universal headship is accomplished. But his headship over his church, including every soul of Adam's race saved through his blood, will necessarily remain for ever. Compare 1 Cor. xv. 24–28; Rev. xxi. 22, 23; xxii. 1–5. A kingdom of holy beings under the kingship of the Son of God, and serving God day and night in his temple, basking for ever in the sunshine of his smile, is an object whose beauty and riches, glory and grandeur, it is impossible befittingly to describe or even to conceive. Yet this kingdom is one of the eternal results of the gospel.

2d, The subjects of this kingdom will be a countless host. Millions upon millions of souls will be saved from sin and ruin, and raised to endless life and boundless glory. We lament the millions of souls already lost, and the millions more likely to perish; and we

stand amazed at the permissions of him whose judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out. And when we ask, who slew all these? our hatred to sin is stirred to the lowest depths of the soul. But it is our joy to know that those who already stand before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands, are a great multitude which none can number, out of all nations and tribes and peoples and tongues, Rev. vii. 9. And if the countless throng which the apostle John beheld belongs to one particular era of the church, we may ask, what will be the host of millions yet to be gathered in, both from all kindreds and from all ages of the world, to the end of time? We have reason to believe that many millions have already been redeemed; and in the ages to come, but, above all, in the latter-day glory, we are assured that countless millions more will be gathered into the kingdom. The missionary work which, for these last seventy years, has been spreading through the world, and the bright effulgence of the thousand years of Satan's imprisonment and of Christ's reign on the earth, give us the assurance, not only of glorious days yet before the church, but also of millions upon millions of souls yet to be brought to God and raised to glory. The glory of the salvation and the endless life of such a host, baffles the boldest flights of imagination. When we multiply all that is valuable in one soul, and all the woe it has escaped, and the joy to which it is raised, a million times, and this again by millions more, and see a million, yea

ten million millions of souls made perfect, who can describe, who can conceive, the glory of the gospel in its results? And this, and much more, we have no doubt, will be seen when the mystery of God is finished, when the work of redemption is complete, when the wonderful windings of Providence with man are unfolded to view, when mercy's work is done, and the streams of grace have spread into a sea of glory.

In conclusion—

1. As we believe that, while the earth and the works in it shall be burned up, the word of God shall abide for ever, let all see to it that they set their hearts upon that which will last longest,—upon the word and not upon the world,—knowing that their portion hereafter will correspond with their love here.

2. As the future glory of our bodies is determined by the present care and condition of our souls, let every one save his soul by faith in Christ; then we have the joyful prospect of both soul and body being like the angels and like Christ for ever and ever.

3. As our freedom from tears hereafter depends upon our freedom from sin here, let every one remember that he who lives in sin now, is ripening for weeping and wailing hereafter.

4. The eternal results of the gospel are rich consolation to the people of God who are suffering from poverty and distress, or trials of any kind, in this vale of tears. The rich and the strong and the prosperous have in their life-time good things; while the poor and afflicted saints, like Lazarus, have evil things. But

the day when "all things shall be made new," will bring about a glorious change to believers. Then, in body and soul and estate, they will be comforted; while the unbeliever will in all the three be tormented. At present, the earth is mainly possessed by the ungodly, and the largest and fairest portions of it by those who are farthest from God; while the most of the heirs of eternal wealth are toiling in comparative poverty. But when all things are made new, this will be made new. The scales will be turned. The poor who are rich in faith, being heirs of the kingdom which God hath promised to those who love him, will, at the re-appearing of Jesus Christ, inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; while the richest unbeliever shall go away into everlasting punishment.

5. Let all, then, be determined for themselves to reach that glory, which is thus in the glorious gospel brought within their view. "Strive to enter in through the strait gate." Be resolved to take the way to life, however narrow. Can you hear of the glories of the redeemed, and be content to be shut out? Can you hear of the love of God, in the death of his Son for the life of sinners, and trifle with this love, and neglect this death, and lose this life? Knowing that you are as welcome to the blessings of the gospel as the millions who are already before the throne, having washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, we ask you to answer God's question, and say, "Why will you die?"

NOTES.

The word Gospel. Page 14.

By all Saxon scholars it is allowed that *Gospel* is compounded of *God*, which is either the qualitative *good*, or the name *God*, and *spell*, a story. A few observations on the word *spell*, and its compound *Godspell*, may be interesting to the scholar, and tend to throw farther light on the beautiful word which is the theme of this volume.

1. The word *spell.*

Ogilvie's Imperial Dictionary has the following remarks:—"*Spell*, Sax. *spel*—a story, narration, speech, saying, fame, sudden rumour, a magic charm or song. Hence *Gospel*, Sax. *Godspell.* In German, *spiel*, in play, sport; *spielen*, to play. The verb primarily signifies to throw or drive, and is probably formed on the root of the Latin *pello;* Gr. βαλλω. See *peal* and *appeal. A story or tale*—

> 'Start not; her actions shall be holy:
> You hear my *spell* is lawful.'—Shakspeare.

A charm consisting of some words of occult power; any form of words, whether written or spoken, supposed to be endowed with magical virtues—a superstition peculiarly prevalent among the ancients:—

> 'Begin, begin, the mystic *spell* prepare.'"—Milton.

Wharton, in his notes on Spenser's "Faery Queen," says:—"*Spell* is a kind of verse or charm which in olden times they used to say over everything which they would have preserved; as the *night spell* and the *wood spell* for thieves. And hence, I think, is named the *Godspell*, or word. Chaucer sayeth—

'Listen, lordings, to my *spell*.'"

Spenser's words are—

"Fell headlong into a dell, and there unjoynted both her bones,
Mought her neck bene joynted attones she should have nede no more *spell*."

Dr Adam Clarke says:—"The word *spell* still signifies an incantation or charm. The word in this sense occurs in King Alfred's translation of Boethius's '*De Consolatione*,' cap. 38: 'Da ongunnon leare men thynkan *spell*,'—Then began deceitful men to practise incantations. As the word *spellian* signifies to teach, hence our word to *spell*; that is, to teach a person by uniting vowels and consonants to enunciate words, and thus learn to read. Hence the book out of which the first rudiments of language are learned is termed a *spelling-book*, exactly answering to the *spell-bok* of our ancestors, which signified a book of homilies or plain discourses for the instruction of the common people. *Spell-boda*, the orator or messenger."—*Clarke's Introd. to Gospels.* Spalding says:—"*Spell*, tale, history; in composition, *bispel*, a by-tale, example, parable; *godspel*, good history, gospel."—*English Literature*, p. 107.

2. The compound *Godspel.*

It is somewhat uncertain whether the word *God* in *Gospel* is the substantive or adjective. In Saxon, when both were spelt alike, according to Spalding the vowel in the former was short, in the latter long; thus *Gŏd*, *gōd*. In the author of Gamelyn, the latter is spelt *gode;* thus, "God yeve them gode grace;" that is, good grace. And Chaucer writes, "The

legende of gode women." Dr A. Clarke says—"The word *Gospel* should always be written Godspel or Godespel"—a thought with which we heartily agree. "Among Saxon scholars the word has been variously explained. Mr Somner, who writes it *God-spell*, explains it thus: '*Sermo Dei mysticus, Dei historia*'—The mystic word of God, God's history. But he supposes that it may be compounded of *gōd*, good, and *spel*, a message; and very properly observes that *godspellian* signifies not only to preach or proclaim the gospel, but also to foretell, to divine. We may see that *God*, among our ancestors, not only signified the supreme being, but also good or goodness, which is his nature. *Godspell*, therefore, is not only God's history, doctrine, or plan of teaching, but also the good history, the good doctrine."—*Clarke's Introd. to Matthew's Gospel.* In English there are several words similarly compounded, and all having a religious meaning—an eye to God—as God-father, God-mother, God-speed, God-send, God-yield, God-sib, God-spel. In these two last the *d* has been carelessly dropped. From *sib*, a kinsman or friend, comes *God-sib*, a friend in religion, a sponsor; from which the general idea of a neighbour, a tattler, now corrupted into *gossip*. So *Godspel*, a story of religion, a good story, or God's story, has been changed into *Gospel*. As God-speed is success from God, and God-send, a gift from God, and God-yield, fruit from God, so God-spel may be a story from God.

The oldest example of the word *Godspel* which we have found in Saxon literature, is in a paraphrase of the Gospels, entitled *Ormulum*, written by one *Orm* or *Ormin*, some time about the twelfth century. The following extracts from the Introduction will shew both the use and the spelling of the word seven hundred years ago:—

"Ic hafe wend intil English *Godspelles* halighe lare,
After that littii wit that me mine Drihten hafeth lened,
Ic hafe sett here o this bock among *Godspelles* wordes,
All thurh me selfen manig word the rhyme swa to fillen,
And Ic ne mihte noht mine verse aye with *Godspelles* wordes,

Well fillen all and all furthi sholde Ic well ofte nede,
Amang *Godspelles* wordes doe mine word mine verse to fillen."
—*From Wanley's Extracts, Bodleian MS., Junius* i., from an Essay prefixed to Chaucer's poems.

By the time of Chaucer and Wycliffe, the word *Godspel* had come to be written *Gospel*, omitting the *d*, as at the present day. Chaucer, describing a parish minister, says—

"A good man ther was of religioun, that was a poure persone of a toun,
But riche he was of holy thought and werk; he was also a learned man, a clerk,
That Cristes *gospel* trewely wolde preche; his parishens devoutly wolde he teche."

The word Gospeller. Page 14.

This name, which properly denotes *a reader or preacher of the Gospel*, seems to have sprung up between the days of Wycliffe and the Reformers, and to have been first given to those who, at the risk of their lives, would read the Gospels in their own tongue. Hence it came to be equivalent to a Lollard or Wycliffite, and was a name given to the Reformers in the days of the Tudors. Bunyan uses it to denote a believer in the Gospel, and calls Christians Christ's Gospellers:—"And since this is so also, it will be your wisdom to begin to profess the Gospel, with expectation of the cross and tribulation, for to that are my *Gospellers* in this world appointed." Of Christ's intercession, he says:—"Wherefore I say, be exhorted to the study of this part of Christ's work in the managing of our salvation for us. And the ceremonies of the law may be a great help to you as to this; for though they be out of use now as to practice, yet the signification of them is rich, and that from which many *Gospellers* have got much."—*Bunyan's Works*, i. 106, 238.

The Four Records of Christ's Life early called Gospels. Page 15.

The historical use of the word εναγγελιον, *gospel*, applied

to the narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, is as old as the days of Justin and Origen, who both lived in the second century. Justin says—Οι αποστολοι εν τοις γενομενοις ὑπ αυτων απομνημονευμασιν ἁ καλειται ευαγγελια —"The apostles, in those memoirs made by them, which are called *Gospels*."—*Apology*, i., ch. 66. Origen also says—Ὑπο Ελληνων συνεχως γραφομενα τα ευαγγελ'ια μη ειδοτων τον υιαλεκτον—"The *Gospels* were written frequently by Greeks, who did not know the dialect."—*Comment on Matthew*, xvi. 19, Opera iii. 748. For these two extracts, I am indebted to Dr Alexander's excellent work on Christ and Christianity

God called the Happy God. Page 29.

In our remarks on "the glorious Gospel of *the blessed God*," we have given reasons for a decided preference to the rendering of the Greek, "*the happy God*." As some may yet be unpersuaded, we are happy to give other authority. Tillotson has a discourse, entitled "The Happiness of God," and says, "I nowhere find the attribute of happiness given to God, but only twice in this epistle. It is true, indeed, the title of blessedness is frequently given both to God and Christ, but in another sense, and in a quite different notion, as Mark xiv. 61; 2 Cor. xi. 31; Rom. i. 25, ix. 5. But in all these texts the Greek word is ευλογητος, which, though we translate *blessed*, yet it is a quite different notion from the title of blessedness which is given to God in the text, where the word is not ευλογητος, but μακαριος,—the blessed or happy God." Robert Hall says—"Among all the conceptions we form of the Supreme Being, there is none the propriety of which we can less doubt than of his perfect happiness; nor have any who have believed on him failed to ascribe to him this perfection in the highest possible degree. He is styled in Scripture "the blessed and only potentate," "the happy God."—*Tillotson's Sermons*, Ser. 132; *Hall's Works*, v. 376.

The Love of God, as seen in John iii. 16. Page 82.

One of the best illustrations which we have seen of the greatness of God's love in the Gospel is in the humble but pithy lines ascribed to a lunatic at Cambridge :—

"Could we with ink the ocean fill,
Were the whole earth of parchment made,
Were every bit of stick a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of the God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor would the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky."

THE END.

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